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VIII. 3



## The Cover

Once there, but going, going, gone — forever!

The sad demolition last year of the historically interesting and architecturally significant corner of the former Marra's Bread property owned by the Town of Amherstburg.

Some days before the rest of the adjoining structures, of no significance, had been torn down and the site cleared, but on the day representatives of the Ontario Heritage Foundation visited Amherstburg to view the historic Gordon House and offer the town financial support to help preserve that important building the final coupe de grace illustrated here was performed before the very eyes of two horrified directors of the Foundation. We were not able to record the directors' words or thoughts, although their sentiments can well be imagined. Their appal and disdain was shared by not a few local citizens.

This building occupied an important corner site terminating the section of a narrow thoroughfare, Murray Street, well contained by attractive mid-Victorian commercial blocks. The corner structure appeared to be the older of the two, a well-proportioned brick building with eaves returns and a fascinating gable decoration of diamond lozenge with curved sides. The adjoining addition had been a storefront, the cast iron supports still in place although the divided show windows had been filled in long ago. But those tantalizing possibilities that greeted anyone with the slightest imagination are no more — gone with these buildings are many of our hopes for future preservation and Ontario towns generally, for we had over the years looked up to Amherstburg as an example.

A report some years ago noted the importance of these buildings. An excellent old photograph served as a guide to the restoration of the storefront of the addition on Murray Street shown here. Despite this favourable indication five years earlier of the part these buildings could play in improving the site generally the Council appeared to be against saving them. A later report in greater detail pointed out some problems, including structural insufficiencies, but did not suggest that these were irremediable. Various local organizations offered to pitch in to help and relieve the Town of its responsibilities long enough to evolve a practical preservation scheme. However the Town which had shown such interest in its own heritage previously, with a hard-working LACAC which had achieved a great deal, and with demonstrations of attractive street improvements in the older core area, then perpetrated this catastrophe!

There may still be a chance in the successful culmination of the struggle to save the Gordon House now expropriated by the Town: we are all watching, awaiting a happier outcome next time round.

Peter John Stokes  
Consulting Restoration Architect



MURRAY STREET FRONT.  
Proposal for the South-West corner  
Marra's Bread Property  
Amherstburg, Ontario.

From Interim Report re. Old Town Improvements June 1977

Peter John Stokes  
Consulting Restoration Architect.

0 5 10 feet  
0 1 2 3 metres

May 1977 PJS/CJA

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## The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario Inc.

A society incorporated in 1933 for the preservation of the best examples of the architecture of the province, and for the protection of its places of natural beauty.

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## ACORN VIII - 3

WINTER 1983

## The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario Inc. R Newsletter

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## EDITORIAL

### Fifty Years Young

There is nothing new in the protection of heritage sites. Heritage laws were first introduced in Rome in 457 A.D. It was not until 1666 that Sweden followed, then Britain, in 1881 with the "Ancient Monuments Act". By the end of the 19th century most European countries had followed suit with their own laws to protect heritage sites.

The Architectural Conservancy is, then, young in the conservation field. But after fifty years our voices are being heard in more places than just Ontario. Early in our existence we realized legislation was needed and it was with satisfaction that we saw the Ontario Heritage Act come into existence. While not perfect, it was a great step in the right direction.

Let us continue to be heard.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It is with great pleasure that I write my first President's message for ACORN.

Our special fiftieth anniversary General Meeting, just completed, was a great success and the enthusiasm which it has generated bodes well for the future of the ACO.

Much of the credit for this must go to my predecessor Alice King Sculthorpe who brought to this event the same diligence and dedicated effort which she has to all the other duties which she performed during her term as President.

On behalf of all our members I would like to take this opportunity to thank her for the contribution she has made to ACO and to heritage conservation.

In looking forward to the next two years I hope that ACO will have a double meaning for us; we must also be Active, Credible and Organized.

**Active** in our efforts to protect our heritage whenever it is threatened and active as well in promoting an awareness and appreciation of the architecture of the Province and its places of natural beauty.

**Credible** in the sense that we must be discriminate in our decisions and not influenced by political or other pressures which on occasion seek to use friends of conservation for ends other than those related to the architectural/historical merits of a particular building or buildings.

**Organized** so that the ACO is ready to meet its challenges. To this end I would like to see more involvement of the branches in Council activities throughout the year, possibly through committee structures created to meet specific objectives. The branch presentations were a highlight of this year's Annual General Meeting, architecturally diverse they were also eloquent expressions of the common interest which brings us all together.

Let us keep up the momentum. The ACO is now 50 years young, its best times are yet to come, and if we work together that could be quite soon.

## NEWS FROM EAST TO WEST from the Branches

### QUINTE REGION

#### Designation of McIntosh/Ridley House, Belleville

Readers will recall that the Quinte Region Branch has had a major role in the struggle to save the McIntosh/Ridley House, a particularly noteworthy 'Loyalist' building in Belleville's harbour neighbourhood. Therefore it is especially delightful to share the news that as a result of a Conservation Review Board hearing, Belleville City Council has upheld an earlier decision and voted strongly in favour of designating

the 1817 frame structure under the Ontario Heritage Act. The announcement was a relief to conservationists in the area, but a great deal of work still remains to ensure the preservation of the building.

An agreement has been reached with the present owner whereby the Branch holds a temporary option on the property and will endeavour to raise money through charitable donations to be applied to the eventual purchase of the building. So far, just under

\$10,000 has been gathered towards that goal, as the fund raising programme continues. One highlight has been a wine and cheese reception at which the Wharf Street Players, a local theatre troupe, performed some amusing sketches and songs based on the folklore and history of the early families in the harbour area. While the purchase of the house is still a long way off, the Branch has access to the building and has carried out some basic maintenance tasks.

Anyone interested in supporting our project can forward donations to Box 1124, Belleville, Ontario K8N 5E8.

### **Petrie Stone Building, Belleville**

In light of the awakening interest in preservation in Belleville generated through the McIntosh/Ridley House issue, it is disappointing that a neighbouring landmark has been torn down. Application for a permit to demolish the 'Petrie Stone Building', an old two storey warehouse in the harbour neighbourhood, came in mid-summer and immediately, representatives from the Quinte Branch and Belleville LACAC met with the owners to discuss alternatives that could save the vacant structure. Indicative of the increasing economic pressure for development in the harbour, the owners intended to use the site for a townhouse complex. A plan to recycle successfully the old building into the scheme was ultimately rejected as too costly, and on November 2nd the Petrie building came down.

It is thought to have been built by Alexander Petrie, a prominent local businessman whose 1814 frame house still stands across the street. Although an accurate date of construction has not been determined, the segmentally arched windows suggest a date in the late 1860s. Other noteworthy architectural features were its parapets and corbel treatment.

The stone building was primarily used as a storehouse, but had been left empty intermittently for many years. Through neglect, it had deteriorated, but was certainly complete enough to merit adaptive renovation.



"The Petrie Stone Building was a major landmark in historic Belleville harbour. The McIntosh/Ridley House stands in the background."

Photo by Tom Cruickshank

Although lacking the age and the detailed elegance of the McIntosh/Ridley House, the storehouse occupied a very significant position in the landscape. Fronting Belleville harbour, it was highly visible from both the road and the water, and was a major component of the collection of historic buildings on South Front Street that also includes the McIntosh/Ridley House.

### **Marshall House, Belleville**

The future of a third house in the oldest section of Belleville is now in doubt. The Marshall House, a brick-filled frame building, has the wide five bay façade and low profile characteristic of early houses. It stands on a side street to the rear of the Calvary Temple, which claims to need the site for expansion of its parking facilities.

Like the McIntosh/Ridley House, the Marshall House is another historic building that has retained much of its original detail in spite of alterations over the years. It was built in 1833 by Anthony Marshall, a Kingston doctor. When converted into a duplex, the doorcase (with fanlight transom) was removed, but the bowed roofed verandah and old twelve-over-twelve sash have survived. Likewise the fireplace and bake oven in the kitchen tail are still in place. Also remarkable is the massive chimney on the kitchen wing. The gable over the front door is an addition.

The Church offered the house to Belleville LACAC provided it was removed to another site. However, without a suitable location or the capital necessary to finance such a move, it seems unlikely that LACAC can take advantage of the proposal.

Preservationists are justifiably concerned about the erosion of the historic quality of the area around the harbour. Issues such as the fate of the Marshall House and the demolition of the Petrie Stone Building emphasize the value of preserving the best of what remains, especially the McIntosh/Ridley House.



"The Marshall House (1833) is another endangered building in the harbourside neighbourhood."

Photo by Tom Cruickshank



## Prince Edward County Lakeshore Lodge, Sandbanks Provincial Park

Arson is suspected as the cause of a spectacular fire that levelled Lakeshore Lodge on October 29. Ironically, the long abandoned hotel, the last of the county's resort inns, was the focal point of a recent proposal that would have restored the lodge as the focal point of a major tourism development in Sandbanks Provincial Park.

Lakeshore Lodge was located on a picturesque limestone ledge overlooking Lake Ontario about ten miles west of Picton. It was built only steps away from Prince Edward's famous Sandbanks, a beautiful natural area whose sand dunes became a popular picnic grounds in the late 1800s.

Daniel McDonald is credited with building the hotel, and construction probably began when he purchased the land in 1876. In 1879 McDonald sold half his interest to a partner, John W. Hyatt, and through a contract with the renowned Rathbun Lumber company of Deseronto, they expanded the hotel into the form that stood for just over a century. This was a three storey hip roof structure, with symmetrically arranged wings of two storeys, recessed slightly, which extended back towards the lake. In plan, the building was U-shaped. Architecturally, the brackets and pedimented windows are handsome details of the period, but the most impressive feature was a galleried verandah, which opened off all three stories on the façade. Even after the removal of the verandah, the lodge had a special rustic quality that seems to be unique to these old resorts.

McDonald and Hyatt sold out in 1905, but the lodge remained in operation until the early 1970s. At that time, the hotel was included as part of a land transaction that greatly enlarged Sandbanks Provincial Park. The old inn was closed soon after and stood abandoned and vandalized, awaiting demolition. More recently, a consultant's report recommended that the restoration of the lodge was feasible, and the search had begun to find a private developer that could refurbish the building and operate it on a year-round basis. Conceptual plans called for expansion of trails, and sports facilities and the construction of adjoining lodge complex and restaurant.

Tourism is rapidly becoming more and more important to the economy of Prince Edward county, especially as its scenic quality and historic resources become better known. Development of a first class resort utilizing the old lodge would certainly have been welcome and appropriate and hopefully the redevelopment scheme will proceed. However, without the major historical component, little can be done to recapture the nineteenth century character so vital to tourism in the county.



"Fire has destroyed Lakeshore Lodge, which, although abandoned, was to be included in a redevelopment scheme."

Photo by Tom Cruickshank

## The Octagon, Ameliasburgh Village

Unfortunately, much of the news in the Bay of Quinte area that is relevant to ACORN concerns buildings that have been lost or threatened in recent months. This time, the site is the hamlet of Ameliasburgh, once one of the most architecturally diverse villages in the province and the original site of Roblin's Mill, the striking four storey stone building that was relocated at Black Creek Pioneer Village in Toronto.

The building in question now is the village's octagonal house, built for the miller's son, Edward Roblin. The house was built about 1861 at the height of the octagonal building fad, although its doorcase, with chinoiserie-patterned sidelights is usually associated with older houses. As may be expected in a house of this kind, the building is made of grout — a mixture of gravel, stones and mortar poured in place on site.

Four octagons were built in the county, all inspired by the writings of Orson Squire Fowler, an



"Another building which may soon be demolished is the octagon in Ameliasburgh".

Photo courtesy of Ontario Archives

American phrenologist who advocated the octagon as the perfect building form. Of the Prince Edward examples, this is the most lavishly detailed with decorative gingerbread trim (surprisingly rare in the county) and an octagonal lantern on the rooftop. The house was greatly enhanced by a five sided verandah, shown on the accompanying archival photograph, but since removed.

Admittedly, the house has lost much of its historic architectural character. However, it would be sad to lose a building of such a curious and historically significant design.

## **PORT HOPE**

### **1983 Tour of Historic Homes**

The Branch's annual House Tour held on October 1st exhibited both qualities of a commercial success — a sellout crowd and a great programme. Even the weather cooperated — the day remained rain-free even though the skies half-heartedly threatened several times. In addition to the Town Hall, the commercial Walker Building on Ontario Street, St. Paul's Church in Perrytown, and Dorothy's House Museum, there were eleven private residences. The houses were of vastly differing architectural styles, ranging from the simplicity of an Ontario cottage and Neo-Gothic farmhouse to the grandeur of the Beaux Arts style. The interior decoration of the houses covered an extremely wide range of style and personal expression. This viewer rushed straight home and rearranged furniture for an hour. The House Tour is an excellent way to pick up decorating ideas and methods of rehabilitating an older house to the present way of life, and to enjoy viewing furniture from the Canadian primitive to the European antique. And for art lovers, the day is a feast.

The crowds moved swiftly during the day, but were a little slower on the candlelight tour due to the lesser number of houses on show and their proximity. But no one seemed to mind, and the evening was clear and fresh, with the lamps marking the houses casting an old-world hue. There's something special about walking along a darkened street crackling the fall leaves underfoot and glimpsing tantalizing views of candlelit interiors. The post-tour Wine and Cheese Party at Penryn Park was well-attended and the draw for the Kathryn McHolm drawing of the Town Hall was made at ten p.m. The lucky winner is Mrs. C. Hatch of Toronto.

It was a most enjoyable and successful tour all round and netted the Branch \$11,600 for the Heritage Fund. Hats off to our generous house owners and hardworking House Tour Committee!

### **Annual General Meeting**

The Branch's A.G.M. was held on October 11th,

1983, at Greenwood Tower Inn. Outgoing President Nancy Redner's address outlined the Branch's activities over the last year, including the recent very successful House Tour, the varied and interesting programme of speakers over the year, the various successful fund-raising events and activities, the proposed C.N. Station restoration, the Canada Community Development Project of the Port Hope Almanac and Colouring Book, and culminated with the presentation of the Branch's final cheque of \$7500 to Clay Benson, the owner of 25-27 Walton Street. This was a high point of the evening, resulting in a hearty round of applause, as it represented the completion of the Branch's massive efforts to raise \$30,000 for Mr. Benson to aid in his restoration of this key building on Port Hope's main street. Architect's drawings, plans, and photographs of the restoration process were available for viewing after the meeting. Mr. Benson outlined the work completed to date on the building and announced the commencement of exterior work on the east wall. Also on display after the meeting was the fine artwork of Project Artist Margaret Round which will comprise the colouring book to be completed early in 1984. Mrs. Redner praised the outstanding contributions of Betty Kerr, House Tour Chairman for the past two years, and A. K. Sculthorpe, Past President of the Port Hope Branch and current President of the Ontario Council, to the cause of the A.C.O. Mrs. Redner also stressed that any or all success of the Branch was due to the efforts of all members, through their continuing support through membership or through their assistance with various events or committees.

The slate of new officers and directors was read by A. K. Sculthorpe, moved, and adopted. It consists of Past President, Nancy Redner; President, Jane Staunton; Treasurer, Kay Wilson; Secretary, Shirley Vernon; and Directors Bob Fair, Frankie Liberty, Cathy Moore, Don Robertson, Joan Rumgay, Katherine Sedgwick and Michael Worek. The Advisory Board consists of A. K. Sculthorpe, Anita Blackwood, Susan Thomas, Marion Garland, Roger Kirkpatrick, Wilf Day, Mell Chapple and Honorary Member Peter John Stokes.

New President, Jane Staunton, responded to Mrs. Redner's address by thanking her for her most able and committed leadership, welcoming the new executive members, and outlining some of the many events planned for the upcoming year, primarily among which is the Branch's commitment to raise \$20,000 for the restoration of the C.N. Station.

### **"A.C.O. Matters" Series**

The first programme in the new '83-'84 "A.C.O. Matters" series of lectures and events was held at the

Port Hope Public Library on October 27th. Rob Mikel, post-graduate student in history at U. of T. and former chairman of Cobourg LACAC, gave a slide presentation and talk on the architecture of Cobourg. Mr. Mikel is a walking fund of historical information about old Cobourg and his slides revealed what a treasure of architectural gems Cobourg boasts. Together, they combined to make a presentation that was fascinating, illuminating, and often amusing.

#### New Publication!

The indefatigable Marion Garland has given birth again! This time to a booklet on architectural styles – “*Check the Style of Ontario Architecture*” – a follow-up to her indispensable *Architectural Terms* publication. It is available for \$1.00 (plus 32¢ or a stamp) by writing directly to Mrs. Garland at the address on the inside cover. These two pamphlets, plus an A.C.O. bookmark of course, make a nice little architectural gift to poke in the Christmas stockings of all those building devotees on your shopping list. All for a good cause, too!

#### LACAC News

LACAC Vice-Chairman, Ted Hunt, was the local delegate to the Heritage Canada Conference in Toronto in September. He found the conference fascinating but of little real relevance to the workings of a LACAC, which, granted, it was never intended to be.

The Heritage Conservation District Study and Plan is now being reviewed prior to final printing. All concerned with its development, from the embryo stage to its final incarnation, have found the process extremely worthwhile, challenging, and provocative. Public meetings to present and discuss the Study and Plan with the public will soon be announced.

LACAC has struck a sub-committee to formulate design guidelines for owners of designated properties. These should prove most helpful to both parties concerned.

LACAC Chairman, Mell Chapple, reports that the fifty-third designation under the Ontario Heritage Act is now in progress and applications for designation keep arriving at the Town Hall.

#### 1984 Calendars

The 1984 Historic Port Hope calendars are still available by sending \$4.95 plus 35¢ tax to A.C.O., P.O. Box. 56, Port Hope, Ontario L1A 3V9. Proceeds from sales of the calendars go to the Port Hope Heritage Fund which in turn is directed to the C.N. Station Restoration Project. Everyone needs a calendar and this one is particularly handsome and inter-

esting, historically and architecturally. Please support this worthy fund-raiser – we need every dollar we can raise for the C.N. project.

R.R. #1  
Port Hope, Ont.  
L1A 3V5  
25 October, 1983

#### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Branch Editors and Readers:

I would like to know which Branches and LACACs within easy driving distance of Port Hope offer walking tours of their communities to visiting groups. The Program Committee of Port Hope Branch wishes to arrange trips of this sort for our membership. We would be happy to reciprocate if desired. I am also eager to hear of any exceptionally interesting speaker on architectural or historical matters that you could recommend, yourselves included!

Please write to me at the address on the inside cover or telephone me at 416-753-2302. Thank you.

Yours truly,  
Jane Staunton, President  
Port Hope Branch, ACO

#### TORONTO REGION

The 1983-1984 programme of the Toronto Region branch of the Architectural Conservancy is a varied one and promises to be most stimulating. It ranges all the way from Baron Haussmann's 19th century Paris to Eberhard Zeidler's recent updating of the Art Deco Terminal building in Toronto.

On Wednesday, October 19, at 8:00 p.m. a lecture on **Confederation Square** will be given by Philip Goldsmith of Klein and Taylor Architects, and formerly of the Thom partnership. He was involved in the renovation of the Confederation Life building which in 1891 was the “last word” in office buildings. Today, it still holds down the important corner of Richmond and Yonge in Toronto.

On Wednesday, November 16, at 8:00 p.m. **The Terminal Building** at Queen's Quay will be featured in a talk by its rejuvenator, Eberhard Zeidler, architect of Ontario Place and the Eaton Centre.

On Sunday, January 15, at 3:00 p.m. the topic is **Courthouses and Town Halls**. Marion MacRae, joint author of *The Ancestral Roof* and *Hallowed Walls* will present a talk on heritage public buildings of Ontario with material from her new book *Cornerstones of Order*.

On Wednesday, February 15, at 8:00 p.m., the subject will be **A fair flourishing town: development and expansion of Toronto**. The speaker, Anne De



Fort-Menares, is an architectural historian for the North York Historical Board and has lectured on historical aspects of urban design for the University of Toronto.

On Wednesday, March 21, at 8:00 p.m. **Historic Preservation** will be addressed by Margaret Bailey who works in the preservation branch of the Toronto Historical Board. The Board has compiled an **Inventory of Buildings of Architectural and Historical Importance in the city of Toronto** and advises City Council on matters relating to the Ontario Heritage Act.

On Wednesday, April 18, at 8:00 p.m., we will be treated to **An Evening in Paris** by our own Donna Baker, former president of the Toronto Region branch. Donna works as a researcher for the C.B.C.'s **Marketplace**, and has a special interest in architecture. Her light-hearted look at the grand design of Baron Haussmann for 19th century Paris will include a present-day update.

All of these lectures will be held at Hydro Auditorium, West Mezzanine Level, 700 University Ave., Toronto.

For the information of all members of the other branches of the Architectural Conservancy who are most cordially invited to attend, the Hydro Auditorium is located at the south-east corner of College and University. It can be reached by subway, or if you come by car, there is a parking lot one block west of University Avenue on Murray Street.

### **Toronto Sesquicentennial Project**

After considering several projects that have been suggested to celebrate Toronto's Sesquicentennial, the executive has decided to explore the possibility of conducting a series of walking tours next spring. There continues to be much interest in Toronto tours. Since members of the Toronto branch already have researched and conducted them, this should be a worthwhile endeavour.



## **HERITAGE CAMBRIDGE**

### **Heritage Awards**

This year Heritage Cambridge instituted what is to be an annual competition for Heritage Awards. The awards are intended to recognize and encourage outstanding contributions in the restoration and preservation of old buildings. The general public is asked to participate by nominating worthy candidates. Judging is to be by disinterested experts in the field. There are two categories — one for private homes, the other for commercial, club or business buildings. This year there were nine entries. The judges were "*City*

*and Country Home*" editor, Barbara Neal, noted Guelph rehabilitation architect, Karl Briestensky, and George Kapelos of Fidinam Canada Ltd. "Dewbrooke Farms", the home of Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Witmer, won first place in the residential competition. It is a cutstone farmhouse, built in 1853. The one and a half storey house has been enlarged by a two storey addition, skilfully added by the present owners. The judges commended the Witmers for their sensitive approach in renovating and improving their property. Adding lustre to the first place win was the high calibre of the other entries. They were the Hysinger house on West River Road, the Thomson house on Fallbrook Lane, and the Schneider house on Cheese Factory Road.

Winner of the commercial category was "The Mill" restaurant. Built in 1842, "The Mill" occupies a commanding position on the corner of Water Street and Parkhill Road. It has a spectacular view of the Grand River, and full advantage was taken of this in the massive renovations which restored the exterior of this fine stone building, turning it into an elegant dining lounge. The other four entries in this section are also notable examples of how old buildings can be adapted for use while retaining the special qualities which make them a valuable part of our heritage. They are "The Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce", "The Preston Medical Centre", "Richardson Securities", and "Cafe 13", a part of "The Boardwalk" complex — all outstanding old buildings in full modern use.

### **Annual Meeting**

Heritage Cambridge held its annual meeting at the City Hall Council Chambers on Tuesday, October 25th. President, Cynthia Dobbie, welcomed the good number in attendance, and gave a short report about the year's activities. A highlight was the presentation of a brief to the Waterloo Regional Heritage Foundation, ably done by Gerald Musselman. This resulted in a grant to Heritage Cambridge of \$10,000 to enable certain specific projects to be carried out. These projects will be given a great deal of attention in the coming year. The hiring of two students to do work during the summer was of great help. Slide presentations were put in order, research done about city parks, and a future walking tour of the Hespeler area outlined.

Another recent activity was the House Tour. Mrs. Dobbie called on the co-chairmen of the tour, Sylvia Takacs and Alison Jackson to come forward to receive thanks for all their work. Mrs. Jackson was not able to be present, but Mrs. Takacs spoke for them both and gave credit to the whole committee. A presentation of a George Brown heritage print was made to each of the chairmen.

The presentation of the Heritage Cambridge Awards then took place. The award for a private home went to "Dewbrooke Farms", the home of Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Witmer. The commercial award was won by "The Mill" restaurant. This fine old building has four owners who must share in the credit for its preservation. The owner of the restaurant is Mr. Steve Stratos, who accepted the award.

The main business of the meeting, the election of directors, then took place. Officers for the coming year are: President: Tom Ritson, 1st Vice-President and Secretary: Joy Rayner, 2nd Vice-President: Don McKay, Treasurer: Dave Hopps. Directors are: John Clare, Margaret Goodbody, Katherine Hebblethwaite, Pat Rosebrugh, Harry Rossdeutscher, Wendy Schearer, Joanne Smart, Bob Wall, and Elizabeth Weigand. A presentation was made to retiring president, Cynthia Dobbie. Mrs. A. K. Sculthorpe gave a most interesting speech about the A.C.O.

### House Tour

A beautiful day in October added to the enjoyment of the many people who attended the Heritage Cambridge fall house tour. The sun was of particular value at Central Church, showing the full glory of its wonderful stained-glass windows. This fine church was built in 1882. It is a notable architectural feature of the central Galt area. Tea was served here in the afternoon. Four delightful homes exemplified different styles of architecture, each with much of interest in both structure and contents. The Meikleham residence is an elegant Victorian house, with all the elaborate and excellent workmanship typical of that time. The Simmons residence, an early twentieth century house, has remarkable woodwork and a triple fireplace. The Ritson house is built on the lines of a stately colonial house, while the Hysinger farmhouse reflects the style prevalent in the earliest stone houses of this area. Also on the tour was the head office of "Clare Brothers", a splendid example of practical conservation. Built about 1860 as the Clare family home, this fine stone building now houses a modern office complex. Co-chairmen for the tour were Sylvia Takacs and Alison Jackson, and they had many eager helpers, all of whom deserve credit for a successful fund-raiser and a very happy day.

### NORTH WATERLOO REGION

Our branch had a very uneventful summer.

Our fall activities opened with our annual lecture series, in which we decided to do something different from the house lecture tours, as we felt the need of some variety, and as the house tours are more suited to spring-time when the exterior and gardens can be seen.

We therefore decided to have an "Author's Lecture

Series", in which authors would be invited to talk about whichever aspect of their work they chose to.

Our first speaker was Chris Moore, a former member of our branch executive, whose first book *'Louisbourg Portraits'*, recently won a Governor General's Award. Chris is now working on a new book, about the Loyalists, and he treated us to a very anecdotal lecture about some of the people that he has learned about in the course of his research. Chris seems to have developed a remarkable talent for finding out about the ordinary people who are a part of, or who are caught up in the great events which form the traditional history of Canada, and for writing about these people in a way that sheds an entirely different light on these events. The Loyalist book should be fascinating reading.

Kim Ondaatje was our second speaker. Her book *'Old Ontario Houses'* is well known, and she has more recently written a book on small churches in Canada. Much of Kim's talk was illustrated with slides many from the church book, and some of the shots were absolutely stunning. Those from north-western Canada, in particular, showed the effect of the loss of congregations and, in some cases, the abandonment of church buildings, set amongst scenery so grand as to at once render the church buildings both insignificant and yet symbolic of man's struggle against the environment.

The third lecturer was Ken McLaughlin, a history professor, whose book *'Kitchener, an Illustrated History'*, is off the press. This book chronicles and explains the evolution of Berlin, a small community with no great water-power advantage, into the modern thriving city of Kitchener. Ken McLaughlin described the architecture of Kitchener as both a result of the past of the earlier inhabitants and of the aspirations of the more successful of subsequent generations.

As this is written, we are looking forward to John English, co-author (with Ken McLaughlin) of *Kitchener; an Illustrated History* who is to be the final lecturer of the series. It is anticipated that John will talk about the urban development of Kitchener.

Our next planned event is our Annual Christmas Party of our members. This year it is to be held at the former Red Lion Inn in Doon; the condemned ex-hotel, ex-student housing which is being re-habilitated by Bill and Caroline Byfield, and which was one of the houses featured in last spring's lecture tour.

### GENERAL CONSERVANCY NEWS

#### THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 50th Annual General Meeting was held in Port Hope, on November 12. The activities began with registration at Trinity College School on Satur-

day morning, followed by a talk by Dr. Peter John Stokes on Design and Periods in Ontario Architecture.

**Dr. Peter J. Stokes' Talk  
at Annual General Meeting**

**Ontario's Architectural Styles**

**Introduction:**

Of necessity I must be reasonably brief yet comprehensive. Unfortunately time will not permit me to fill in all the myriad details of purely local origin, the mark of an individual craftsman or builder or the byproduct of local material. My broad brush strokes, however, may paint in the background sufficiently to help you identify your own material and to complement what I have to offer with your own specialties. You will be able to assess the contributions of your own community to a complex though relatively short architectural history in this province which is just about to enter its third century. Two hundred years of building has produced a remarkably varied result, from the traditional to the bizarre.

What I have chosen to illustrate the story of architectural style and its evolution in Ontario is not necessarily applicable to all parts of the province. Moreover it represents a selection from the noteworthy to the ordinary, from the work of plain builders to the designs of architects. For better understanding and comparison the buildings I will show have been grouped into four categories comprising domestic structures, churches, commercial types and those having essentially a public or civic function. This is a convenience to assist in presentation and appreciation of the wealth of building at hand. But many variations have to be left out, of necessity, for you and others to fill in as you will. Possibly I will have an opportunity to allude to these variations, or your future questions may demand more complete explanations.

Furthermore the presentation is arranged more or less chronologically to indicate the architectural progression. The impression may be created that there is a concentration upon the earlier examples, but these are usually the more important expressions of our older traditions and beginnings of life in a new place. But because of their age any which have retained their original detailing more than average are precious relics of our building inheritance. This is not to say that the later products, the enormous productions of our Victorian and Edwardian periods are to be neglected in a full and proper consideration of our building stock, but the multifarious expressions of those later times would take several more sessions to explore. For it is then that eclecticism is everybody's sphere — the exuberant combinations of surface decoration and exotic detail and form quite boggle the mind. And architects are still reeling from the reper-

cussions — for an all-too-brief exploration of alternatives to satisfy themselves while some are slipping off to taste enrichment inspired by a tradition considered dead, and everyone else tragically tiptoes through the tulips of nostalgia.

There is an architectural tradition in Ontario, one well-founded, and though sharing roots with other areas, developed with infusions to distinguish this province. Both influences from elsewhere, building materials and local practice helped to shape that individuality which identifies this part of Canada and occasionally indicates when you have reached home. That tradition came first from the American side. Our early buildings therefore have a decidedly North American appearance derived from that background. That influence continued, but was supplemented by other infusions directly from elsewhere as settlers came from older countries, principally from Scotland, England and Ireland, in some ways the origin of the more recent American tradition.

Thus the Georgian tradition was already in an advanced stage and once removed. Other reactions were setting in, and the age of revivals saw the exploration of alternatives. Strict formality succumbed to domestic comfort and convenience. Improvements in heating and other arrangements meant changes in house planning: romantic notions of what a house might look like catered to the individual's penchant for self-expression — and there were builders only too anxious to oblige. Formality retreated to the public and corporate mind, the expressions of government and commerce, and that was more the realm of the emerging profession of the architect.

We start with the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century house, a formal symmetry paramount, neatly disposed openings regularly spaced, one-and-a-half to two storeys high with a medium to steeply pitched roof and massive chimneys. But contemporary with these, and few enough were built, even fewer surviving, settlers were struggling to clear the land building small frame or log houses to follow the original shanty built as a first shelter. Many of these survived until well into the nineteenth century, some into the twentieth to be replaced by the ubiquitous "Farmers' Advocate" box. These early houses were often unpretentious and regular in appearance, and as soon as opportunity presented itself were replaced with more pretentious structures.

The simply monumentality of the Georgian form gave way to a more refined delicacy of detail but the same discipline in proportion and scale was exercised. This change corresponds with the liberation of the American craftsman to develop what is described south of the border as the Federal Style. For lack of a better description this neo-Classicism has been described here as Loyalist. It shows the same concen-

tration upon intricate detailing particularly in wooden parts using classical profiles and often based on American pattern books like those of Asher Benjamin. The period lasts essentially from about 1810 to 1830 and in some more remote areas even later.

Developing alongside the Loyalist style is an indigenous expression which results in more robust treatment, bolder detailing, yet with the same formality in design. It continues as an alternative to experiments in the Revivals, the latter reserved for the intrepid, the enterprising and those who considered they had arrived at the top of the heap. Canada West being what it was, there were many aspirants and hopefuls so that these experiments occur in more modest form from just prior to the mid 19th century.

The Greek Revival in its more formal declaration shows bold detailing evolved from the antique as well as pattern book models, the work of Minard Lafever among them. Greek Doric and Ionic orders were those most favoured. Eared trim, often with tapered architraves or jambs and two panelled doors become notable features. Square corner blocks to simple, broadly treated symmetrical trim is another common detail and broad flat profiles. Although the Greek Revival became essentially a public style in the United States and many civic buildings subscribed to this mode as well as substantial and smaller houses too, in Canada West the style is more commonly domestic. A classicism of Renaissance inspiration, more akin to the Palladian, was favoured by the architects of the period for public buildings, their old country training possibly connected with this response. But the Greek Revival filtered down directly from American sources and a few impressive examples survive, the influence finding its way into lesser buildings as I shall show.

Concurrently a desire for the picturesque and the romantic led to considerable interest in the Gothic Revival. First finding an outlet in association with the strict classical formality of early churches, where the only deviation would be a pointed Gothic window, the Gothic Revival found ample expression in new houses in the country and in expanding smaller towns about the mid-nineteenth century. Gingerbread ornament was used with great effect — the variations were almost infinite. Gradually the development of less formal plans allowed for more playful silhouettes.

About the mid nineteenth century the small house often a single storey, or a main floor above a high basement, almost a lower ground floor, made its appearance in most communities: for ease of description this has been dubbed the "Ontario Cottage". Characteristically with hipped or "cottage" roof, end chimneys and a three bay front — a centre door often with

transom, occasionally with sidelights too, and a window to either side — this appears in frame, brick and stone according to local availability of these building materials. Sometimes a lantern or monitor was added to light the attic and in some forms the eaves were remarkably wide. A front verandah is often associated with French windows divided into a pane and a half in width. The prototype might be taken from the early nineteenth century Butler House, an elegant Regency cottage in form. This compact house form, if without a commodious basement, often had a rear wing, or it could be extended in depth to fit a narrow lot. Ideal for an independent artisan's house it often served the enterprising craftsman and his family, the more affluent worker, or the retiring couple. As a house form it was easily adaptable to changing circumstances and was modest in size and consequently in cost although many exhibited charming elaboration to entrances and windows as in the Guelph triplet.

While the Ontario cottage took on the cast of other styles currently in vogue the basic form persisted. But the Greek and Gothic Revivals were soon to have a competitor in the Italianate, a style promoted by the American firm of Andrew Jackson Downing, and Calvert Vaux, who was to write a pattern book, one of many to be published from the 1840s on, launching a new wave of inspiration in cottage and villa architecture for those in improving circumstances. Downing and Vaux showed designs of picturesque form and outline, sometimes with mediaeval undertones in detail as well as those modelled after the villas of Tuscany with wide bracketted eaves, low pitched roofs and towers. The Tuscan villa was to be a popular form in the 1850s and 60s and to persist into the Second Empire period of the 1870s and 80s when its tower became pointed or a mansard reflecting that of the main house. Tall, narrow windows, often arranged in pairs, those more important treated with round or decoratively arched heads are another feature.

The mansard roof, with its steep face often ornamented with elaborately framed dormers and its surface decorated in patterned shingling or slate, is a distinguishing feature of the Second Empire style of the 1870s and 80s. The upper roof is with a very slight pitch or entirely flat relying on sheet metal, composition or built-up roofing for watertightness. However bays and bows often abound in urban examples and chimneys are still a prominent feature although by then serving more sophisticated heating systems and small coal-burning grates as a decorative adjunct to principal rooms. The stock mantelpiece with round-headed opening, either in marble or marbled slate or cast iron, and first appearing in the 1850s and 60s, is almost universal. Cast stone ornament appears, in the

1870s with fine incised decoration rather like spidery arabesques, and in the 80s of bolder form, the ornamental keystone being a common detail. The common semi-detached of Toronto's midtown makes its appearance.

As the 1880s wear on and through the 1890s, upper parts of windows above transom bars become filled with elaborate stained glass. Around 1900 much of this is bevelled and decoration of Art Nouveau inspiration prevails. Porches and verandahs in the latter half of the nineteenth century, as in other woodwork details of brackets, drops and bargeboards achieve great variety, often by the various combinations of mass-produced items. Delicate trellis-work of the verandahs of the 1840s and 50s gives way in the 1860s to chamfered posts and arabesque filigree, in turn replaced by heavier posts and solid brackets. By the 1890s repetitive use of stock ornament produces spindle and spool work in astounding variety. Many of these later houses are adorned with heavy gables over protruding bays, the gable filled with ornamental tiling or shingling. In the 1870s and later the upper sash are often filled with myriad of small panes, the lower sash in a single pane of glass. The elaborate outline and shingled finishes are often given the term of the Queen Anne style. Why this misnomer is applied, heaven knows, for it is almost the exact opposite of the taut disciplined Renaissance designs of that queen's reign. Perhaps it is derived from the architect Norman Shaw's essays inspired by that earlier period, which though by derivation and dilution became abused and debased had to have an air of respectability.

It is the late nineteenth century which produces an exuberant array of revivals, curiously combined often with exciting effects. The period's only saving grace is its vigour and utter disregard for platitudes. Derivative decoration is applied without concern for origins: the exotic results may be repulsive to the purist, but the visual interplay is frequently captivating. All sources of inspiration were tapped: a half pint of Moorish might be splashed at the base of a chateau-like creation in pressed brick edged in red sandstone and adorned with terracotta ornament. The interiors were equally diverse: it seemed to go with the cultural clutter of the age. The only influence which seemed to have any direction at the time was that of the American architect, Henry Hobson Richardson, whose interest in the Romanesque brought a determined revival in that direction with all types of buildings, but most notable in civic buildings of the late nineteenth century and to a lesser degree in finer houses.

However a reaction towards the unbridled eclecticism of the late nineteenth century was soon to make itself felt. It took two directions in Ontario —

one inspired by the return to English domestic styles, the other concerned with the American colonial period. The work of such architects as Eden Smith, possibly again because of his training, took the former course. But closer to the hearts of many others, especially builders of the time, was the Colonial Revival of the late Victorian and Edwardian periods about the turn of this century. All the claptrap of the earlier period was brought out and applied, as well as misapplied, sometimes to symmetrical designs, often to irregular plans. Tall two storey porticos occur at the front, the columns with a notable bulge or exaggerated entasis and flattened Ionic caps, the balconies adorned with protruding balustrades, usually resembling a bulging basket in section. Palladian windows, fanlights filled with clear glass, lozenge-shaped and leaded, and oval lights with pronounced flared keystones set vertically or horizontally were common ornaments. Eaves had pronounced cornices with modillion brackets, roofs sported Palladian windowed dormers, and narrow clapboard would be painted in soft colours with trim picked out in white. This is an appropriate place to end our introductory survey of the historic styles of Ontario, for after this we can leave it to those still keen on the modern movements, including the International Style and students of the Bauhaus and later to carry on where we leave off.

Ontario has examples of all these manifestations of earlier architectural developments and more variations than I could possibly cover: I leave it to our branches to help fill in some of the gaps and it should promise to be a varied and pleasurable feast.

Peter John Stokes,  
Consulting Restoration Architect

Representatives from each branch then gave short reports on the areas' architecture, accompanied by colourful slides. A few of these reports will appear in the next three or four issues of ACORN. Dr. Stokes then gave a brief summary of the various reports and thanked the branches, noticing what a rich and varied architectural history the province had for a relatively short building period.

## **BRANCH REPORTS GIVEN AT THE A.G.M.**

### **Architecture of North Waterloo Region**

Presented by Bob Rowell

Although North Waterloo contains the cities of Kitchener and Waterloo, much of it is still rural farmland. This rolling productive land is in intensive agricultural use, some of it by descendants of the Mennonites who first settled the area in the very early 19th Century. While the earliest shelters of these



settlers have, typically, not survived, many of their subsequent dwellings are with us today. One of the earliest of these, the 1820 Joseph Schneider House in what is now Kitchener, has been restored and is open to the public. It shows many of the basic characteristics of these early Georgian houses; a south facing house with a gable-ended roof, chimneys located astride each of the roof ridges, and a pair of small, almost square attic windows at each gable. Many of these houses are symmetrical five-bay structures but three-bay versions and even a symmetrical four-bay version are not uncommon. These houses were built of frame, brick, stone, or, as in the now-removed Hallman house, of log.

The 1847 Rudy-Snyder House illustrates another Waterloo County characteristic: the Doddy House. The Doddy, or Grossdoddy house is an addition, often a generation later than the main structure, built to house the elderly farm couple as the son and his growing family took over the farm and the main house. Doddy houses vary greatly in style. Most are in the form of side wings, some are sideways enlargements of the main house, and a few are nearby, separate buildings.

The 1842 Wissler House sprouted tails rather than wings. This house is a bit of a surprise in Waterloo County; instead of the usual plain interior, there is more than a hint of Greek, including a two-storey entrance hall. The present owners, as a part of their restoration research, have learned that John Wissler had family ties to Virginia as well as Pennsylvania. The Georgian style was also used for non-residential buildings; the Blue Moon Hotel shows the principle of sideways expansion: the near end has an 1855 date-stone, while the far end is earlier. The Georgian style was retained quite late in Waterloo County. Many of the houses have datestones from the 1840s, the 1850s, and the early 1860s, while this house in Wellesley is estimated to be c. 1870. However, at the same time as the Georgian style was persisting, another style was becoming popular. The one-and-one-half storey, symmetrical three-bay house, has often been referred to as Classical Vernacular. In Waterloo County, however, there is very little, if any, classical visible. These houses usually have the long side facing the road. The gable ends normally have two first storey windows and two slightly smaller second storey windows spaced slightly closer together. They were also built of stone, frame, or brick, and the exteriors are usually devoid of any decorative features other than eave returns and sometimes fairly elaborate doorways. However the interiors sometimes also provide surprises. As time wore on, these smaller houses began to sprout frontal gables, perhaps as a means of lighting the upper hall. In some cases, these were added to earlier houses, but more often were a part of the

original structure.

Only a select few houses had elaborate decorations, but bargeboards were fairly common. This style, which could be called Gothic Vernacular was less formalized than the Georgian, and thus more adaptable to both high design and highly informal examples. Once conditions were right for the local architecture to modernize, it did so relatively quickly. The Italianate style came first, both in ornate and in much plainer style that typically dates to the 1880s. The Victorian Styles followed very soon; this house is dated 1880; the example with the curved verandah is 1907. A few houses, such as the 1903 poured concrete example, were designed by American architects. These early 20th Century buildings are not unique to Waterloo County; the designs could have come from any of the previously more advanced communities of central Ontario, and probably did. Since we have shown the progression from Georgian survival to typical Victorian, it is time to leave houses in order to mention a few other highlights of Waterloo County; the Mennonite Meeting Houses still in use, the overshot and louvered barns, both indicating early Germanic influences, and Ontario's only remaining covered bridge at West-Montrose. This blend of busy city and peaceful countryside makes North Waterloo Region an architecturally interesting area.

## Port Hope

Presented by Marion W. Garland

Port Hope has survived tragedies and near tragedies caused by man and nature: religious feuds, flooding, fires, and town councils.

When I once asked an older citizen if she could tell me something exciting or interesting that had happened to the town, she shook her head after thinking for several minutes, and told me that, really Port Hope had always been a quiet, simple little town, where nothing very extraordinary had ever happened, and where life flowed on peacefully from day to day.

Well, that's not true. Port Hope has never been dull. It is a beautiful, vibrant, exciting place in which to live, and as Ontario towns go, it is an old one.

Around 1793 the forests in this area gave the early settlers their log shanties and cabins. The first lumber mills on the Ganaraska River which cuts our town in half, allowed them to build wooden houses. When these burned as most of them did, the brick kilns in the area provided the building material for many of our present buildings. Port Hope is known as a red brick town. One of the attractions of the Port Hope architecture is the diversity of the house designs. We have examples of nearly all the styles.

We have no true Georgian houses here, although

some Georgian touches such as the 12 over 12 paned windows in Canada House do occasionally appear.

The Neo-Classical house dates from 1810-1835. The semi-elliptical fan-light over the front door is one of the trademarks, as well as the sidelights. Roman and Greek temple-like columns supporting a pediment are other features. The Bluestone, built in 1832



has all these characteristics. Port Hope has more Classical buildings than those of other styles, although all are not as grand as the Bluestone.

The Classic Revival style is well demonstrated in this house on Walton Street. The columns of pilasters are made more obvious by delicate fluting and classical ornamentation in the entablature. The fanlight of the Neo-Classic is replaced by a rectangular window over the door.

Upper Canada Regency, 1820-1840 is represented by this cottage on Dorset Street. The houses were more like cottages, called bungalows, and were either one or one and a half storey. The door was in the centre, and large. Sometimes elongated first floor windows with small panes were featured. The front verandah sometimes continued around the sides of the house. One occasionally sees geometric lattice work in the railing and columns.

The Italianate buildings, 1835-1875 were often



square and massive, capped with square towers. Windows were often rounded at the top.

The Mansard or Second Empire style, 1850-1880 is

easy to spot from its lines. The name Mansard derives from Monsieur Mansart, architect to Louis fourteen. The use of one and two storey bay windows, often results in irregular outlines of a building. Cast iron



bits of cresting which are sold now by antique dealers by the inch, often were used in the hundreds of feet as ornamentation of the larger buildings.

Ontario Gothic or Gothic Revival, 1840-1855 is probably the most easily spotted. This style seems to have reflected the individuality of the builder, resulting in imaginative, rich, stately, or grotesque buildings. Ontario Gothic is distinguished by the ginger-



bread trim, pointed arch openings, sharply pitched gables, decorative details, irregular shapes, and exaggerated roof pitches.

Richardsonian Romanesque is generally associated with the 1880s-1890s. It is called after the American architect, H. H. Richardson who was its foremost advocate. The style features a bold masonry, free treatment of Romanesque ornament, round-arched openings and multi-panelled doors. Red sandstone and red brick were popular materials for this style.

The Victorian was more a period than a definite style. It sometimes refers specifically to the latter part of the era when building is often characterized by eclectic detail, a free borrowing from all and sundry historic styles to create exuberant patterning, a richness of texture, for long regarded as either extraordinarily vulgar or entirely superfluous.

Row houses may be found in several mid-nineteenth century examples. Barrett's Terrace probably built in the 1850s represents a form of housing popular in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The architecture of Port Hope cannot be considered unless one looks at the Ontario cottage. These single storey houses with 'cottage' or hipped roofs evolved from early rectangular shapes with heavy internal chimneys, through those with external chimneys. Later we see a Neo-Classic porch added, and later still, those with verandahs on several sides appeared. Port Hope's style of Ontario Cottage is an attractive red brick design often built on a sloping site to provide another usable storey in the basement. A front gable is a common treatment.

A word about Walton Street, Port Hope's formal main street must not lose any more buildings. (Torville Terrace and Firehall) Both these buildings were lost as a result of the 1980 flood. This street is probably the most intact mid-nineteenth century main street in Ontario. It has a splendid feeling of containment, and to quote Dr. Peter John Stokes, it is a "heritage beyond compare." One near tragedy occurred when a town council gave a permit to Scotts Chicken Villa to build a red and white building, complete with the revolving bucket showing Col. Sanders' goateed face, right at the foot of Walton Street. Some of us put up a monumental fight, with letters to the *Globe and Mail* which were answered from all over Canada, and that paper even printed an article with a picture of the main street, titled Village Versus Villa. We won that fight. Col. Sanders is now beside the railway tracks.

The flood lost us the firehall. When the wreckers took it down, one was heard to exclaim that it was a very hard building to demolish as it had been so well built. Interesting to note that the only building that fell right down in the flood was a three year old one.

Port Hope has had many names. The Mississauga settlement was known as Cochingomink. At one time it was called Ganaraske. In 1780 it had taken its English name from the trading post established by Peter Smythe, and was called Smith's Creek. Later it was called Toronto, and then Port Hope. The first settlers called it "The Flats."

Why did these early citizens of Port Hope build these styles of houses? One cannot speak for individual taste. Many of them came from upstate New

York where Greek Revival is predominating. But whatever the style, thank goodness they built so well. We must learn to appreciate what we have in our historic architecture, because lack of awareness is probably just as much a danger as the wrecking machines. While we have won some battles, we must not be smug. As Conservationists we cannot afford to relax our vigilance. I would like to thank Pierre St. Laurent for showing his beautiful slides.

## **Toronto: Rosedale Architecture**

Presented by Maureen Spratley

In 1788, Lt. Colonel John Graves Simcoe, to form a conservative colony across the water from a revolutionary state, set out to create an aristocracy in the town of York. All officers and officials who had moved from Niagara-on-the-Lake were given land grants, and United Empire Loyalists were similarly rewarded. These grants took the form of 32 100 acre park lots north of Queen Street, and became the 'estates' of the Toronto aristocracy.

In 1827, Mary Powell Jarvis moved to her husband's home, a lovely farm east of Yorkville. The masses of roses had prompted her to rename it "Rosedale", and her walks and rides through the woods were the basis for the winding streets which still wander through the district.

As the years went by the population grew, the estates were divided and sold off. By 1905 Rosedale was listed by Simpsons as a "charming suburb".

While the architecture in the area reflects a broad range of styles and periods, it is unique in Toronto because of the many houses that have survived from the late Victorian period. These fine homes of three and four stories, are built of the terracotta brick that is to the era what brownstone would be to New York City.

Most of them have survived as single-family dwellings, although the trend is to duplexing. Built in the 1880s, they are being renewed with little change to the façade, but with the creative use of modern paint colours they appear to twentieth century eyes as fine as when they were first built.

Although Toronto abounds in vestiges of its historic past, the most cohesive collection of buildings survives in Rosedale. There are also some fine examples of pre-Confederation buildings scattered throughout the district; more recent buildings occur in north Rosedale; and two streets of workmen's houses, restored in recent years, stand on Collier and Asquith Streets.

Descriptions and slides of examples of Rosedale dwellings from pre-Confederation times to the early twentieth century illustrated the rich variety of design which fills the area. Representative buildings include



124 Park Road (1830-50). The house was built in 1870, and listed in the directory of 1877 as Rose Villa. It was owned previously by Reginald Geary, Mayor of Toronto from 1910-12. The house has been little altered since it was built. It is a beautifully designed building. The original house had one storey surrounded on two sides by a veranda. As the years went by, additions were made, and at one point there were 25 rooms with five fireplaces. The original ceilings were 14' high. The original gaslights are still in the basement.

#### 23 Rosedale Road (Rose Cottage)

The land was purchased and built upon in 1872 by Arthur Harvey. There have been many additions and alterations to accommodate multiple occupancy, but the core is still one of the oldest houses still standing in Rosedale.

#### Asquith and Collier Streets

Most of the houses were built about 1890 and by mid-twentieth century, were worn out and showed it. Many were rooming houses. In 1954, Collier, and



later Asquith, attracted the attention of some young Toronto architects including David Molesworth, and these two became the first in Toronto to be re-born. Since then, most of the forty-eight houses on the two streets have been renovated and are single-family dwellings again.

There have been countless additions to architectural Rosedale. Every style is represented: Victorian, Tudor, Palladian, Georgian, Tuscan, French Provincial, and Gothic.

During the lunch break, short tours of the school were enjoyed by some of the visitors.

The afternoon began with a panel discussion of the problems faced by LACACs. The topic proved to be of interest to many people in the audience who had been involved in LACACs in some capacity, and the discussion was a lively one. The panel itself was chaired by Margaret Rowell, Waterloo. Other members were Nicholas Hill, Huron, Katherine Hebblethwaite (Cambridge), and Joyce McCulloch, Ottawa.

The major area of discussion revolved around the designation of historically and architecturally significant buildings. One participant noted that designation of any building against the owner's wish is little more than the beginning of the demolition process, in that it sets a time limit after which the building in question may be torn down. Also discussed was the practice, common among LACACs because of restrictions by their councils, of designating a building only when its owner has requested such designation. That practice, some said, means often that the most significant buildings are left undesignated, while buildings of questionable merit are granted designation.

A seminar on successful infill was led by a panel of architects. Howard Chapman, Toronto, chaired the panel, and introduced the guest speaker, Olaf William Shelgren, Jr., Buffalo. Others on the panel were

Howard Walker, (Toronto), Dr. Peter John Stokes, (Niagara-on-the-lake), and Chris Borgal, (Goderich). Each panel member gave a brief talk, illustrated by slides, on what, in his view, constitutes successful infill. Examples of highly unsuccessful infill were also discussed.

A lengthy debate followed the architects' presentations. One of the questions asked was whether compatible infill should be an imitation of the historic buildings which surround it, or whether instead it should take off in new, yet sympathetic directions. Audience and panel alike agreed that the latter is generally the more acceptable solution.

A cash bar was held in the foyer of the School, and dinner was served in Osler Hall. After a grace in Latin given by Mr. Terence Bredin, and the toast to the Queen, dinner was enjoyed by over a hundred members, the roasts of beef being carved at each table.

The annual meeting itself was held in Cobourg, at Victoria Hall. Mrs. A. K. Sculthorpe was in the chair. The usual formalities were followed, including a report from the president, the treasurer's report, and the election of officers. Mr. Howard V. Walker is the new president, Mr. Nicholas Hill is the Senior Vice-president. Mrs. Donna Baker, Vice-president, Mrs. Margaret Tucker, Vice-president, Mrs. Betty Dashwood, Secretary, Mr. Peter D. Walker, Treasurer. Past President, Mrs. A. K. Sculthorpe. Members at Large, Dr. Peter J. Stokes, Mr. C. Ian Tate, Mr. Carel Kippers, Nominating Committee, Mr. William J. Moffet, Chairman, Mrs. Alice K. Sculthorpe, Mr. Howard V. Walker, Mrs. Maureen Spratley. Mrs. Sculthorpe wore the Lt. Governor's award which she received on behalf of the ACO at the Heritage Canada Foundation Conference in Toronto on September 23 and 24. Later, this medal was worn by Mr. Walker at the wine and cheese reception.

The guest speaker, Dr. Anthony Adamson, was introduced by Mr. Howard Walker, and thanked by Mrs. T. Staunton, president of the Port Hope branch.

**Talk by Dr. Anthony Adamson to the members of  
The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario Inc.  
at the Annual General Meeting  
on Saturday, November 12th, 1983  
in Victoria Hall, Cobourg, Ontario.**

You have come here to see Victoria Hall and I am as sorry as you are that there has to be a speech after all that we have gone through today but there you are, I am on the schedule and I have to say something.

The reason why I am pushed onto this platform is because, except for two, possibly three others, I am

the last surviving member of the mothers and fathers of the ACO from fifty years ago. I was asked I think to talk about ACO, but on August 1, 1980 I talked at the RCYC to the Toronto branch and my remarks were printed in ACORN. I talked from my memory of the Conservancy.

I am not going over the same story. The ACO has not become what its founders set out to make it which was to be a National Trust for Ontario on the English pattern. It never acquired the prestige which could gain it the financial support of governments, nor of the culturally elite establishment, nor the corporate sector. Its support has been and is today local and grass roots. But it has served well, in helping to change social attitudes toward the conservation of buildings of architectural merit, its members infiltrating more powerful bodies.

I have not been close to the ACO for many years but I have been close to the conservation movement so I thought it might be appropriate today to trace this movement for conservation in Ontario back to its origins or early forms, and try to indicate, as I remember it, what the climate for conservation was like in 1933, and finally to discuss operations today.

I think that the two basic urges to conserve our heritage, in whatever form, stem from family pride and from patriotism, not from artistic appreciation. In our generations we all came to Canada because we were losers. We like to think our pioneer ancestors were filled with higher motives but they in truth left their 'old country' because they had nothing to gain if they had stayed there. They came to a new country that was not their country, and in that new country they had no family roots. It is no wonder that the conservation of our historical records either in documents or in our structures was therefore slow to gain public support.

It is recorded that the citizens of Kingston petitioned the Upper Canada Government to preserve the French 'landmarks' there in 1811, but I now think the 'landmarks' were the survey pegs.

The first actual sites which attracted sufficient attention to be considered worthy of conservation were battlefields and some of these had related buildings. These were patriotic sites. The architect Cumberland called our forts "sacred symbols of the struggle for imperial unity". Our colonial pride of country, our patriotism in the 19th Century was for an "imperial unity". We were a jewel in the crown of the Empire but our jewel was but a little stone on the great golden crown of an Empire which took in a fifth of the world's population.

The British Empire and its power preserved us as a nation in the 19th Century but it did not give us pride in our little National or Provincial achievements or in our individual family's Canadianisms. A 19th



Century Lieutenant Governor, Anglo as all get out, noted that "a large number of strangers" were coming "to settle among us" and they had "to learn that their country has been fought for"

In Ontario two organizations were formed in the 19th Century which bear out my thesis that conservation basically stems from pride of family and from patriotism. The first in date was the York Pioneer and Historical Society founded in 1869 under the famous Doctor Scadding. The second in date was the Ontario Historical Society founded in 1893. The York pioneers were people who had already rooted themselves and become proud of it and wished to conserve what ancestors had produced in Ontario. The OHS took its first stand patriotically on Fort Erie, then it became outraged that Simcoe's Navy Hall in Niagara was being used as a stable, and then that the Federal Government was going to sell off Fort George in 10 acre lots. Their base was patriotism. In 1905 and for about ten years thereafter the OHS fought the City Council of Toronto who wanted to run street car tracks through Fort York. Then in 1906 the first conservation committee in Ontario was formed. It was the Historic Sites Committee of the OHS but architectural interest was negligible. By 1912 the York Pioneers had 1000 members and the OHS had 400.

Credit must unstintingly be given to the Women's Wentworth Historical Society who in 1899 bought the Gage House on the battlefield of Stoney Creek. This became the first historic site and building secured in Canada by citizens for permanent preservation. In 1899 women were not expected to take such public action. They may have had the vote but in law they were not "persons" yet they — the women of Wentworth Co. — scored the first goal in our game. It was still however a game of battlefields in 1900 even perhaps up to 1920.

Records of course were conserved by men. The boundary of property privately owned had to be studiously recorded, as had laws and by-laws and minutes and wills and marriage settlements and contracts and sales — the stuff of history. Our heritage and history came to be regarded as documents, even by the OHS.

There were also 'collections' of all kinds made by collectors which had to be housed for scientific study and historical record — curiosa. Every large city or old town began to have a museum, or a few cases of artifacts somewhere and these were frequently housed in old buildings. An example of such a museum building, though larger than others, was Dundurn Castle in Hamilton. These kinds of buildings became their city's attics. In unheated Dundurn for instance were housed from 1901 until 1966 several collections of birds eggs proudly given by children of a deceased,

a piece of string wrapped around a small log to show the circumference of a Sequoia tree — which was thought to be of educational value, twenty-eight black lace shawls which were too beautiful to throw away after they went out of fashion, a miniature Taj Mahal made of match sticks and a two headed calf. All these adorned the great rooms of the mansion of Sir Allan MacNab, Bart, P.M. of the United Canadas. Museums collections of this nature proliferated.

Architecture from the past was something we did not have or seem to have in early 20th Century Ontario — if you excluded forts. Of the few people in government who thought of conserving buildings at all the action of T. B. McQuesten, Minister of Highways under Mitchell Hepburn is remarkable. He drove the horses out of Navy Hall, having acquired it from the Federals, but he thought of it as an artifact and encased its timbers within stone walls. Restoration of forts he found very useful as make-work for the unemployed.

This was more or less the state of affairs in 1933 when an elite group took an interest in architecture, the despised or unknown early architecture of Ontario. The 19th Century Ontarian and the early 20th Century Ontarian may have been proud of his city hall and his court house and the new tall building in town and there were good architects with taste. The taste however was, it was thought by the public, imported. It was not our taste. We were just Canadians. Classical buildings were copied were they not from somewhere. If we had a tall building in town, it was nowhere near as tall as they had in Buffalo. If we had a cathedral it was made of brick — for God's sake! If we had an architect to design us a house he would as likely as not ask us if we would like one in the 'colonial style'.

The American approach to architectural conservation was somewhat different to ours because the country was older — though of course worse. Under considerable pressure — again from women — 'Colonial Dames' and the "Daughters of the American Revolution", architectural taste in the late 19th Century after the U.S.A.'s centennial, and in the early 20th Century Americans looked back, past 'manifest destiny', past the 'war between the states' to the time when they were British as well as American. We were always British as well as American. Suddenly the 'colonial' style in the USA began to overrun their schools, libraries, universities, town halls, churches and houses, and to expedite this overrunning, dozens of books were published on the colonial style, to give design assistance to architects. At a date in the early 1860s just before the Civil War, Codey's Ladies Magazine appealed to the women of America to give 50 cents, or 25 if they could not afford 50, to buy and

preserve Mount Vernon, then being lived in by several Virginian tenant families. It was not till after the war that anything was done. Patriotism at work and women again. In 1876 the U.S.A. had their centennial and Philadelphians without doing sufficient research took on Independence Hall as a patriotic anti-British duty and surmised, wrongly, that the Declaration of Independence was signed in the room on the right because it was larger than the one on the left. These two events are indicators of the start of both the colonial revival and the conservation of architecture movement — our game.

So the Toronto architect who might have asked his client in 1910 or 1920 whether he or she wanted a house in the colonial style had for ready reference a number of measured drawings in a number of books on his shelves. and Rosedale and other eminent areas began to dress itself in a British style at second bounce. When the first book on the history of Ontario architecture was published in 1963 the style of Neo classicism fostered in New England at the end of the 18th Century and brought to Upper Canada by displaced Americans was dubbed by its lady author the 'Loyalist Style'.

The elite founders of the Conservancy, Wasps, as I remember them, to the core, were interested in architecture regardless of history or patriotism or perhaps of family connection. The Ontario Historical Society was very much down at the time and I don't think its special committee on buildings was still in existence in the 1930s. It had, anyway, concerned itself with documentation and artifacts, but we elite founders of the ACO imagined ourselves as laying the foundation for a National Trust on the British model. We had no hope from governments. These looked after property rights, sewers, highways, armies and freight rates but not our souls or our tastes or our heritage. These things governments suspected to be of no consequence because these could not be quantified and also did not have votes.

The prime mover in the formation of the Conservancy was Eric Arthur, a man from New Zealand, a graduate in architecture in England who had come out I think to head the school of architecture at the University of Toronto. He never did but he did a lot of other things. It was, I think, he and Vincent Massey — a very right honourable and super-wasp — who when faced with the impossibility of changing the name of the National Trust Company so that we could use it conceived of the noun 'conservancy'. The only conservancy Eric knew was the Thames Conservancy which had the pleasant responsibility of caring for the swans on the Thames, which swans were all the property of the Queen. Naturally we started to look for swans in our architectural heritage.

Unfortunately, or fortunately, Ontario has been

very short of titled aristocracy living on 100,000 acre estates and living in Chatsworths, Kedleston, or Blickling Halls. So the Conservancy broke its teeth on the house of Eliakim Barnum U.E. in Grafton. We all lent our Regency chairs, argued about the use of Scalmandria wall papers, looked for Barnums, and bought Wedgewood urns and set up Colonel Barnum's front rooms better than he ever did. In the back we put in tenants. The roof leaked. Tenants came and went. People gave black lace shawls and bird's eggs, and the gallant Conservancy gave the house over eventually to a municipal attic—more or less. But before they did they were influential in raising money to preserve St. Andrew's at Niagara-on-the-Lake.

I covered in August my memories of the history of the Conservancy from 1933 to 1983 but I will give a few dates of other organizational happenings in these 50 years before considering what the climate of today is for our game. The 2nd war almost snuffed out both the Conservancy and the Ontario Historical Society. This possibly resulted in Queen's Park setting up a Provincial History Advisory Committee in 1950 to "preserve, develop and publicize our historical resources". In 1953 the Archaeological and Historic Sites Board of Ontario was formed and started work. In 1956 it erected the first historical plaque. Between 1945 and 1956 local historical societies established 25 museums which necessitated an OHS museums section instead of a buildings section, and it also soon necessitated a branch in the Department of Travel and Publicity to advise these museums on what to do. The Capitalist Welfare State began to take over in the 1960s and 1970s. The Ontario Government began giving grants to the OHS, the Federal Government started an inventory of buildings (CIHB) and named an Advisory Committee on Heritage Conservation. This must have done something but I don't know what. The main Federal thrust was through Parks Canada which took over some Ontario sites and buildings. Ontario Conservation Authorities and three Provincial Parks systems from the centennial year 1967 on got into pioneer villages with trees, and the historic restoration of houses as did a number of counties, cities and towns. The original Architectural Conservancy of Ontario plugged along behind, pointing out chiefly the errors of government at each level, arranging walking tours, events, publishing, forming branches and beginning to do all the things we have heard about today.

The two decisive acts of the Ontario and Federal Governments which influence conservation today in Ontario were the 1975 Ontario Heritage Act and the Federal Act which set up and financed Heritage Canada as a private non-governmental body at the National level. This was constituted to do all the things the ACO intended to do at the Provincial level

in 1933.

Before this Ontario Heritage Act started work in Ontario in 1975 the Government had six years earlier in 1969 set up the first edition of the Ontario Heritage Foundation. This was a commission of citizens assisted by civil servants who had the responsibility of encouraging donations to the Province of art, and anything else cultural including buildings, and recommending proper tax deductions to the donors. Under the new Heritage Act of 1974 this group (OHF) was absorbed in a larger Ontario Heritage Foundation. This new Foundation under sections of the new act worried over the properties and donations which had already been acquired. It worried over archaeology and the control of digs. It worried over the setting of historical markers and, using a little money and grants for conservation, it worried over protection. The most important committee was of course the Architectural Committee. The Architectural Committee of the O.H.F. have responsibilities which members of the ACO know about. So from 1975 for the first time buildings began to have some protection through "designations" and there were grants and easements and there were a bunch of interfering official citizens and lowly bureaucrats telling architects what they ought to do with buildings of architectural merit and there were clutches of councillors forced to take their eyes off sewers, parks and zoning. A trouble immediately arose. Federal and Provincial authorities owned many of these buildings of architectural merit and one Ontario department, through a citizen committee, started telling other departments what to do. The principal antagonists of the new O.H.F. were Hydro, the Post Office, the Railways, the Department of Highways, several Municipal Councils who thought the Province should do all the paying and thinking, the Attorney General's Department and that massive mutilator of Ontario public buildings, the Department of Government Services. The Government of Ontario was a house divided against itself and this may not happen in a decent one-party state like Ontario.

Meanwhile around the Ontario Government yapped branches of the Architectural Conservancy. Around the municipal governments yapped a new breed, the LACAC's. Then around the country yapped Heritage Canada, financed by the Feds to bark at everybody but not to give them money.

It is going to be 1984, and if the two damn super powers don't blow our heritage all to hell, Ontario will be 200 years old. There is a population here now with roots, and we have a Province with a patriotic self-esteem and we have some legislation. What is the climate for conservation? I have learned much of the answer today.

The Ontario Government since 1933 has itself

acquired 29 properties on which about 20 buildings of architectural merit are conserved — this includes the Barnum House. We laid it as a nest egg. The Federal Government through Parks Canada owns Canal Systems, four forts, two houses of Prime Ministers, a municipal pump house, all the old Post Offices which it has left, a theatre and an indefinite number of houses whimsically acquired. The Ontario St. Lawrence Parks Commission maintained Upper Canada Village and a number of other buildings. The Niagara Parks Commission still keeps Navy Hall wrapped in T. B. McQuestin's stone cocoon, it owns some battlefields, a fort and buildings of historic and possibly architectural merit. Two brand new forts were built in the last two decades and four pioneer villages. Under the Heritage Act 1700 buildings are designated by municipalities and can't be pulled down for six months, and there are 137 LACACs, wooing their councils and servicing their building inspectors. Ontario has had BRIC operating for two years and you have all heard its problems, and it expects to have handed out \$750,00 this year from a five year budget of \$8½ million to private owners of designated buildings. This was done because the Government wanted to make designation attractive. The Ontario Heritage Commission has 80% of its funds committed for next year. There are four Heritage Districts set up and in place under the Heritage Act. Government Services has been told that many Provincial Government Buildings have some architectural merit and that plywood on top of hard-to-clean court room panelling is not the only solution to maintenance. Transportation and Communications has been told about old bridges. Governments have come to realize that their tax systems have been responsible for preventing the saving of innumerable buildings in the past. The Heritage Administration Branch has 50 employees. Heritage Canada is thumping its chest, and there are I think some 40 chests to thump, about Perth and mainstreets and its magazine and its educational courses — all things set out as aims of the ACO in 1933. Ten year old Heritage Canada — the new boy — condescendingly hangs a little medal around the 50 year old ACO. The ACO pats Marion Garland on her one back for keeping the ACORN alive, and has moved out of part of a back office on College Street into a front office, where we have half of Mrs. Wulff.

In 1933 the word heritage applied to spiritual things, God, Runnymede, grandfather's gold watch. Today 1983 everything is heritage particularly architecture. The public is steeped in it. In the Toronto phone book there are 42 commercial operations named heritage, Heritage Cleaners, Heritage Custom Brokers, Heritage Ford Car Sales, Heritage Lifestyle, Heritage Movers, Heritage Pharmacy, Heritage

Upholstery, Heritage Visual Sales. In fact there is too much interest in our game. Some don't know the rules and how to play.

What inhibits in 1983 the proper playing of our game? Basic to our problem is the fact that there are no criteria for judging architecture. The Federal Government in 1975 and on several occasions the ACO has tried to define what is 'good'. Decent rich people's houses? Frozen grace of mainstreets? The Feds gave up on an initiative to prepare a Canadian Register of Heritage Properties (CRHP) to show what is best, and in the files of the ACO and the OFH and the OHS and the OMA are many definitions. The problem has been recently exacerbated by an American concept, the supposed need to conserve the cumulative history of a building regardless of architectural goodness. This justifies keeping ugly accretions as historical, and also relieves conservationists of having to make any decisions on what to do with old buildings of merit.

An inhibiting influence which is lessening is the antipathy of contemporary architects to buildings of the past. The 'modern movement' in architecture, which may some day get a name, grew in the architectural schools in the 1950's and 60's from the need to destroy in the young contemporary designer any wish to base his designs for buildings, built in contemporary techniques and with modern materials, on a style of the past! This teaching was so successful that architects were altogether antipathetic to 'our game'. Along with Heritage Cleaners and Heritage Custom Brokers, architects are now coming to realize that there is even in Canada a propriety to recycle and there are now heritage architects. This type of architect has become so evident in Britain that something like, I am told, 80% of building permits are now for remodelling or recycling and architects don't get a chance at a new building.

Another inhibiting influence which the ACO must be careful of is the ever present need to be conscious of the relativity of values. The value of the amenity of a new building against the value of the telling historic character of the old. It has been our job to be very much one-sided in this fight over relative values, but now that a public awareness is aroused and our game comes under scrutiny, we have to be careful and really and truly analyse why we are a conservancy.

I have been fascinated with the discussion this afternoon. I have noted the problems you and your LACAC's are having, but as Nick Hill has said we must understand the "inevitability of gradualness". We have come a long way in a very short time. Even ten years ago our architectural heritage had no legislative support and only small public awareness. Fifty years ago it had none.

Conservation of our architectural heritage is really only a part of the science of urban and rural planning for the future. The first step into this has been the formation of Heritage Districts which have put the commonplace into the care of a community and its elected persons.

In 1952 I convinced the United Nations that Canada was a backward nation in town planning. At their expense I travelled through Europe with my wife and became fascinated with "architectural design control". Sign control is already with us under Ontario legislation. Soon perhaps we will have as they had in Zurich, Switzerland in 1952, a regulation that all paint used on the exterior of buildings in their central heritage district will have to be mixed in the basement of city hall. Our game has still lots of scope.

Ed. Note

And we note that despite all the goings and comings during the past fifty years, the ACO has survived and even grown — it augurs well for the next half century.

P.J.S.

On Sunday morning a bus tour of Port Hope was conducted by Mrs. Garland, and a little later, Robert Mikel led a bus tour of Cobourg. Lunch in Barnum House, at Grafton, was the last activity of the members. During lunch, a letter was read by Joanne Smart, a member of the architectural committee of Ontario Heritage Foundation, from Mr. John White, congratulating the Conservancy on its fiftieth anniversary. After lunch the members were invited to join in a discussion of ACORN's future.

#### **A.C.O.'s 50th ANNIVERSARY FALL TOUR (No. 3)**

##### **From Toronto to Bayfield (Day 1)**

On Saturday, October 15th, thirteen members of the A.C.O. met in front of headquarters and after some delay, allowing renewed acquaintance (for all but two had been on our second tour in July), and a welcome cup of coffee against the brisk but bright morning, started off on our bus towards Hamilton.

Leaving industrial Hamilton and environs behind, we headed for Dundas passing Cootes Paradise en route. A very pleasing stretch of water at this time of year, reflecting the surrounding autumn colour. We caught glimpses of limestone outcroppings surrounded by brilliant colour high up on the escarpment.

We reached Dundas, and as we drove slowly down the main street, Peter Stokes pointed out that an attempt had been made by some of the merchants and businessmen to bring some harmony into the whole streetscape. Leaving the town behind, we

started the climb to the plateau and for several miles had a pleasant drive through what Peter Stokes described as "ruburbia". Nonetheless, he pointed out, constantly, buildings of interest on both sides of the highway including the stone house at Greensville and later, what attempts had been made to save the cedars, tamaracks, and other trees beside recently improved sections of highway 97 west of Freelon. I particularly remember a very colourful pumpkin field and in the background through the trees a fine old four-square farmhouse. We were now on the scenic route to Galt, the southern part of Cambridge. Approaching the central core, we drove through a delightful residential neighbourhood remarkable for the size and variety of the houses, for the most part with generous lots on colourful, tree-lined streets. We drove across the bridge spanning the Grand River and arrived in Queen's Square with its impressive churches. We drove through the streets of an even more pleasant residential neighbourhood, where driveways and overhead wires were not permitted, to the T. T. Ritson residence on Charles Street, the first stop on a Heritage Cambridge house tour where we were issued tickets in the form of a brochure. This house was built in the Georgian tradition in the mid-1970s and stands in a park-like setting, the ancestral portraits on the walls and the furnishings reflecting the English heritage of the Ritson family.

Our next stop was the I. J. Meikleham house, an elegant Victorian house with a decorative 1895 rounded tower and fireplaces in unexpected corners in several rooms. Our third and last stop on the tour was Central Presbyterian Church in Queen's Square, an imposing stone building of generous proportions. The galleried interior with its curving pews makes a fine concert hall. The stained glass windows are very fine. One of our party pointed out that as one looked up towards the narrower upper part of the building towards the ceiling, the secular world of the ground floor seemed left behind. The ladies in attendance regretted that there was no spotlight to pick out the burning bush motif of the Presbyterian Church in the dark wood of the immense organ screen. As we left the church we were shown the commodious church hall, where tables were set for the afternoon tea for tour guests, and the parlour and Minister's study both charming bright rooms in the new wing.

Leaving Queen's Square, we re-crossed the bridge and headed for Preston, passing the still imposing Preston Springs Hotel, built as a spa and now a residence for Senior Citizens. Shortly we were driving through the rich farmland of Oxford County, passing through the hamlet of Washington and then through Plattsville with its sandpaper factory and Dobson's Antiques, glimpsing as we rushed by, the familiar spires of New Hamburg, the home of the Water Lot

Restaurant recommended by Peter Stokes. One member of our group pointed out the many wide-faced barns typical of the area. We drove through Tavistock distinguished for cheese and apple butter, turning left at Shakespeare. We caught a glimpse of the Fryfogel Inn, still being worked on. Then I remember asking Peter Stokes if he could account for the prevalence of the ugly pressed brick Ontario farmhouse with its two storey front porch. He explained that this phenomenon was known as "Farmer's Advocate" style, having been taken from a design which appeared in this journal around the turn of the century when earlier buildings, in better taste, many made of log, had begun to disintegrate. By now, we were bowling along the Huron Road in Blanchard township heading for our destination, St. Mary's, and lunch. We approached the town from the east hill, Larry Pfaff who was with us and who is a resident of the town, pointed out the water tower and other landmarks. We made for the park on the east side of the river, known as "The Flats", where the Sculthorpes produced a delicious picnic lunch. We stood about in the cool sunlight drinking home-made pea soup and demolishing hearty sandwiches, rich cookies, and pears from Niagara. Just across the river, we could admire the Pfaff's charming house standing on the west bank of the Thames. How enviable to be able to put a canoe in the river at your front door and paddle upstream for a few miles. Larry Pfaff, our St. Mary's guide, then led us on foot up to the dam and mill race where Trout Creek and the Thames converge, pointing out the location of the original mills, and comparing the slightly different construction and shapes of the three arches of Victoria Bridge. As he pointed out, a fourth arch to the mill is no longer plainly visible, but has disappeared under the encroaching street. Trooping towards the business section of town, we took up our position on the southeast corner of Queen and Water Streets opposite the former Opera House which was built in 1890 and which flourished for barely 30 years. About 1920, it was acquired by the miller who owned the property behind it on the river bank, and was incorporated into his mill. At one time Water and Queen Street vied for supremacy as the main street and Queen Street, the east-west thoroughfare won. As we strolled along both sides of Queen Street, our guides, Larry Pfaff and Peter Stokes, commented on buildings of historical and architectural interest. It was pointed out that the lack of decorative details on the building fronts was due to the fact that the limestone was spongy when it came out of the local quarries but hardened so fast that it was not possible to work with it. We stood in front of the original Timothy Eaton Store, now Ross Pharmacy. Apparently Mr. Eaton was disgusted with the local custom of barter and



credit, and decided to open a store in Toronto. The rest, as they say, is history. A cousin of my father's remembered going into the store in St. Mary's and that a bell tinkled when the street door opened and Mrs. Eaton served the customers in the store.

Reboarding the bus, we had a tour of the town, Larry Pfaff being our informed guide. We drove south on Church Street, passing several fine stone churches and further on St. Mary's District Museum, a limestone building constructed in the 1850s of locally quarried limestone with a low stone wall in front of it. The fine cottages on the opposite side of the street had been built by early stone masons, each of whom had his own stone quarry. Years later these individual quarries were acquired by one company and were turned into one famous swimming hole, often advertised as the largest in the province, known as the "Quarry".

Crossing the Thames River south of Victoria Bridge, we drove north on Thomas Street, passing Westover Park, an impressive house set in park-like grounds. It was once owned by the Scarboro Mission who erected a Shrine and Chapel on the property. For some years after that it was run as a Guest House. After completing a pleasant drive along residential streets with more stone houses, we said goodbye to Larry Pfaff, whose knowledge of his home town added immeasurably to the interest of our tour, and headed north.

As we were a little pressed for time, we by-passed Fullarton and Mitchell and pressed on to Exeter. Peter Stokes was familiar with the restoration work done on the Exeter Town Hall, pointing out how this had influenced the improvement of other buildings on the main street. This is a region of "buff" brick, a very mellow colour peculiar to the local clay. Seaforth, our next stop, is no exception and has an interesting main street. We observed the opera house, the town hall, the building housing Bell Industries, an old family company, and noted a fine yellow brick building on a residential street formerly a school, which is vacant and is for sale should anyone be interested. As we drove through Egmondville we had caught a glimpse of the Van Egmond house through the trees, also built of gray and yellow brick. In Clinton wooden hoarding surrounds the town hall while it is being restored. It is similar to the town hall in Exeter. Driving around Clinton's back streets we were charmed by the mellow buff brick houses set on lots of generous proportion, Peter Stokes pointed out the "well defined" street corners.

Thence south on Highway 21 to Bayfield. We crossed the bridge over the Bayfield River, turned off the highway to the right and suddenly came upon the Bayfield green and Main Street. Bayfield is one of only three town sites in the Canada Company's lands

in Southern Ontario which was laid out according to a plan, the others being Goderich and Guelph. In Bayfield the streets all lead up to the green or park although it never became the city which had been visualized.

Our bus rolled up to the delightful Little Inn with its restored first and second floor balconies. Four of us were fortunate to be staying there for the night and the others put up at the Albion Inn down the street, an even more historic hostelry. After inspecting our accommodation, we all ambled up and down the main street in the damp, chilly air laden with leaf smoke. The gift and antique shops were all closed as the summer tourists had long since departed. We left the main street and started towards the lake, passing a number of boarded-up cottages as well as some with cars parked outside and lights on within, suggesting year round weekend retreats. We reached our sunset look-out with the typical wooden staircase going down the steep bank. Waves were pounding on the sand beach below. The sky was dramatic and the lake looked wide, bleak and cold. In the gathering dusk we straggled back through leaf smoke to our respective inns. Some of us enjoyed a pre-dinner glass in the parlour at the Little Inn with a fire going in the fireplace and the new bar adjoining. We all assembled in the dining room for a well chosen and hearty dinner by candlelight.

Retiring early to sort out the impressions of a long, delightful day, we looked forward to an early start on Sunday morning.

Owen Jones

## Day 2 — Sunday, October 16th

After comparing the relative merits of the accommodations of the previous night, we set out bright and early, A.C.O. time — resuming our exploration of the Huron Tract. Proceeding by way of County Road 18 and Holmesville, and passing typical Huron County farm houses of field stone or a mixture of field and limestone, we proceeded towards Goderich resisting the temptation to visit an intriguing looking apple farm en route. From Peter Stokes we learned that Goderich is laid out to a plan devised by the Canada Company in 1830. Its unique town centre, an octagon formed by eight streets leading into it, is or was, ringed by buildings rich in Victorian detail, with the imposing Court House in the centre. Many of the original buildings have been destroyed and their replacements have not always been too sympathetic, although the improved Peoples Store is an exception in retaining the original upper storey. The layout of the town, however generous, does not take advantage of its strategic and important waterfront location. That location plus the advent of the railways, the availability of local stone and clay and the discovery

of salt contributed greatly to the town's development. By the 1850s it was the largest exporter of grain and the largest electoral district in Canada. Our tour of Goderich itself started at "The Livery" where we were welcomed and guided about town by Dorothy Wallace and Mr. and Mrs. Chris Borgal. "The Livery" (see ACORN VIII - 2 page 18) was built in 1847 as a harness-making shop and enlarged about 1870 to include a livery until 1928, since which time it had been put to a variety of uses. Of particular interest are the store front, repaired using local stone, the original wainscoting restored by the local high school students, and on the exterior near the rear, the locations of the original stall windows and the opening to the hayloft above. The Livery's use as a cultural centre will make a real contribution to the community.

Goderich contains many buildings and homes of historical and architectural significance. The imposing Huron County Jail and Court House built in 1839 so the area could be declared a district, continued in use until 1927 and has been restored for public viewing. Of particular interest was the Governor's office and home built near the turn of this century — much more prestigious than one would usually associate with the position. Many of the homes are of local buff-coloured brick; some have ashlar siding of wood — cut to give the impression of stone blocks. The impressive home of John McDonald, a manager of the Canada Company, has been restored by Napier Simpson and still retains the cast iron hitching post and integral mounting block at the front. Another historical Canada Company house, frame covered with masonry, had been occupied by Thomas Jones, a Company officer. We saw also the Carnegie Library, the museum, a station-style house, a house formerly owned by Casimir Gzowski — and much, much more.

Bidding Dorothy farewell in Goderich, Chris continued as our guide by way of Salford with its working men's homes and salt refinery; Benmiller with its complex of buildings making up the Benmiller Inn, and on to Auburn a village whose demise has been brought about by the recent highway by-pass. Except for the post office, the main street has more or less ceased to exist and former shops and even the church are now used as private dwellings. According to Chris, Marlene's Lunch, at the gas station on the highway, closes down at noon!

And so to Blyth, on Hwy. 4, a village laid out in 1855 and incorporated in 1877, where Chris proudly pointed out the restored Memorial Hall (1920) now the Blyth Centre for the Arts. It houses the Blyth Summer Festival whose summer plays (Canadian talent and subjects) and winter cultural programs have brought new life to Blyth and its residents — bringing at least 35,000 visitors annually to a village

of 900.

Continuing on Hwy. 4 we had lunch at the Turnberry Tavern on the outskirts of Wingham. Here we bade farewell to the Borgals and were introduced to Mr. Eaton. Mr. Eaton's enthusiasm and love for his adopted town became evident with his first words. Much of the original tract laid out for "Queen's Bush" in 1858 included part of the flood plain. New boundaries in 1868 permitted the development of the village with its mills, foundries, hardwoods and local clay. Of particular interest is the 1892 "Bank of Hamilton" — red brick built in a Baronial style, reported on by the Advisory Board of the ACO. Although for some years its future was uncertain, it has now fortunately been bought by a private citizen and restored using reclaimed brick and slate tiles. The ground floor will be put to commercial use, and the upper floors retained as a residence for the owner. The Horticultural Society will continue to maintain the small garden on the corner beside the building.

Other heritage properties and points of interest included the Ken Block, of brick with metal trim; the old Post Office, now restored and used as a museum and gallery; the imposing 1890 Town Hall; the Josephine Street park originally designated as burial grounds which were later located out of town; and Centre Street lined on both sides with historical homes and churches. Mr. Eaton's wealth of knowledge about their architectural features was well matched by his anecdotes concerning the personalities connected with them. His own house, a designated building, exhibited siding carefully gauged in diminishing widths towards the roof to give it greater stature.

And so on, via Hwy. 86, to Harriston and Palmerston, late Victorian agricultural communities which flourished with the advent of the railways. Harriston had a well-defined town centre with its Post Office, Town Hall and I.O.O.F. hall. Typical also of the district is the use of local brick and the twin chimneys on many of the homes. With the departure of the railways the communities have declined, being now largely retirement communities. The fact that the C.N. station in Harriston is now a Senior Citizens Centre seems to say it all.

From here we followed the Grand River watershed to Salem and Elora, noting the spruce windbreaks, a late 19th century feature. In Salem, an old mill town, we are back in "stone" country. Elora, in spite of modern engineering "feats", like the new highway bridge across the Gorge, is still a place of remarkable natural beauty. Its Mill Street and its variety of architectural styles and board and batten and stone homes all contribute to its interest and charm.

After a delightful dinner at the Metcalfe Inn, and

undaunted by darkness and rain, we continued on our trip to Guelph whose town plan Peter pointed out, resembles the palm of a hand. Although the darkness and rain may have blinded us to some of the city's architectural "losses", we were not deterred from admiring some of Guelph's gems — the broad expanse of Wyndham Street, the magnificently sited Church of St. Mary's (unfortunately not flood-lit); the City Hall by William Thomas, and the typical turn-of-the-century railway station.

No account of this trip would be complete without mention of our driver-par-excellence, Ron Thompson, who told us, among other things, that the P.M.C.L. (Penetang-Midland Coach Lines) is itself a very old company, having been chartered in 1867 to provide a livery service in Simcoe County. Recently revitalized it now provides not only charter service but municipal public transit as well.

And so ended the third and final Golden Anniversary Year Tour. Such tours do not just happen. Only those responsible can fully appreciate the hard work that goes into making them possible.

From all those who participated in the tours, a sincere vote of thanks;

- \* to all the local hosts, hostesses and guides whose hospitality and intimate knowledge of their communities and projects contributed so much to our understanding and appreciation of them.

- \* to Peter John Stokes who shared so unstintingly and charmingly his seemingly unlimited knowledge of architecture and restoration, history and nature.

- \* to Alice King Sculthorpe who made it all happen. Her imaginative planning (not to mention her complete unflappability when encircled by thirteen eager travellers but no driver or bus) awakened and strengthened our appreciation of our heritage and made the trips what they were — stimulating, enjoyable and a lot of fun.

Would that every year were a Golden Anniversary.

Mollie Christie

(Ed. Note: If support demonstrates Golden + Anniversary Tours will be arranged).

## ERIC ARTHUR MEMORIAL

On Tuesday, November first, the dedication ceremony of the Eric Arthur Memorial Committee was held in East Hall, University College. Friends of Eric Arthur had wished for a memorial to the late architect, and had contacted Peter Richardson, Principal of University College. A site was selected, a minimalist sculptor, Robert Murray, friend of Eric Arthur was chosen, and his blue anodised aluminum sculpture now hangs from the ceiling. The work is controversial, and may or may not be considered a work of art some day.

## UPDATE ON THE ACO TRIP TO IRELAND — MAY 10-25

If you've ever wanted to explore the beauty of southern Ireland — its incredible scenery, picturesque castles, and its own interpretation of Georgian architecture — in the company of congenial, like-minded souls, now is your chance.

The tour we have planned for May includes, in our opinion, the best of Ireland. We will dine in Leixlip Castle as guests of the Hon. Desmond Guinness, founder and president of the Irish Georgian Society. After dinner, this recognized world authority on Irish houses and castles will speak to us and show slides.

We'll lunch on a cruiser on the River Nore, watch them make Waterford crystal, sight-see around the lakes of Killarney by horse-drawn jaunting car, sleep in castles for six nights, attend the renowned Abbey Theatre, visit Thoor Ballylee, onetime home of W. B. Yeats, explore the Burren region — a strange "moon-scape" area of botanical, archaeological and anthropological interest, visit Muchcross House and gardens, Powerscourt estate, Russborough House, a beautiful Palladian mansion with Francini plaster work and a priceless art collection, and many other fine houses and gardens, drive the spectacular Ring of Kerry, tour the sub-tropical areas of West Cork where palm trees flourish, and appreciate the breath-taking scenery of the Hylands of Donegal.

I'll just conclude by saying that this is a deluxe tour with fine hotels, full Irish breakfasts, and all dinners but two are included. The price is \$2617 and includes a \$50 donation to the ACO.

Won't you join us? Our space is limited. For more information call or write to me.

Patricia Rosebrugh,  
R.R. #1,  
Branchton, Ont. N0B 1L0  
(519) 621-9276

## THE DR. ERIC R. ARTHUR MEMORIAL FUND

The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario has established a memorial fund in honour of the late Dr. Eric R. Arthur, founder of the organization in 1933. To be known as the Eric R. Arthur Memorial Fund, this is to be in the nature of a trust fund or endowment intended to provide an annual prize or prizes to students in architecture, architectural technology and allied courses in Ontario universities and community colleges for measured drawings of older Ontario buildings.

Dr. Arthur was associated with the School of Architecture at the University of Toronto, arriving

there in the early 1920s until his retirement in the late 1960s, when he became Professor Emeritus. Dr. Arthur engaged in architectural practice also in earlier years, serving later as a well-known consultant in restoration. He became very interested in Ontario's early buildings shortly after his arrival and during the 1920s and 1930s travelled extensively in Southern Ontario taking photographs and encouraging his students to measure and draw up many of the excellent buildings still surviving at that time. Some of these drawings, now collected in the Ontario Archives, have served as vital documentation for restoration, as in the Ermatinger House in Sault Ste. Marie, and more recently in the Poplars, the former Daintry House in Cobourg. Dr. Arthur's photographs have also proved to be valuable evidence in tracing the original design and detail of older buildings, as recent surveys, such as that in Prince Edward County, have proved. Dr. Arthur was also an author of several books including *Toronto, No Mean City*, *The Barn*, and with Thomas Ritchie, *Iron*.

A contribution of as little as \$20. for every member of the ACO would provide a very substantial endowment to provide the income for several annual prizes as rewards for good work and valuable record. However, any amount, whether less or more than this, would be most welcomed for the Fund, in honour of Dr. Eric Arthur, to further the good work he started.

All donations should be made out to the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario Inc., clearly marked The Dr. Eric R. Arthur Memorial Fund, and forwarded to 191 College Street, Toronto, Ont. M5T 1P7. Please send your return address: donations will be tax deductible and a receipt for income tax purposes will be sent on request.

\* \* \* \* \*

## AROUND AND ABOUT:

### Happenings in Ontario

#### Haspe

The Historical Architectural Survey of Prince Edward, sponsored by the Museum Board of the County of Prince Edward, continues apace. The survey is complete and research largely done: now writing of descriptions to selected examples is being pursued by Tom Cruickshank. The preparation of additional background of historical and descriptive material will provide the County, its LACAC and anyone interested with a record document it is hoped will be of great use towards the conservation of the County's building and landscape heritage. An edited version is contemplated for publication in 1984 to follow, it is expected, the high standards set by the ACO's Rogues' Hollow.

P.J.S.

## RE: HIGHWAYS

The ACO Advisory Board, after the article about the trees of Highway 3 in ACORN III - 2 and a letter to the Minister, has been consulted about improvements to major and even lesser highways across the Province. Various members of the Advisory Board have taken part in investigation and report. On occasion the meetings held by the Ministry of Transportation and Communications to explain proposals to the public have been attended.

It seems from some more recent projects that the early lessons of Highway 3 (from Wainfleet east) may have borne fruit, even to the point of almost going too far. But better that the Ministry err on the side of preservation for a change.

We note particularly the reworking of Highway 97 from Highway 6 at Freelon (a few kilometres north of Hamilton enroute to Guelph), westwards towards the Galt end of Cambridge. With great care the maximum number of mature trees have been spared, the roadside thickets often saved too in large measure and most of the delightful roller coaster which makes it such a fun drive largely preserved. Dangerous corners have been "sweetened", and the pavement, of course, renewed. MTC went to considerable trouble to achieve this, making special modifications to their stock procedures of highway "improvements" (our italics) by providing relief drainage and concrete edges to guide water to catchbasins and thus obviate ditching likely to destroy trees. We commend it to you — and suggest you try it out for sheer pleasure some time. Take it at 80 kmh, the posted speed, and savour the sights as you drive westwards especially to enjoy its summer shade or fall colour. (We hope the vehicle counters are not across the road — or your added tick might cause MTC to reconsider!).

Highway 20 (Hamilton to Niagara Falls) is being improved between Fonthill and Bismarck, east of Smithville. Here even the late 1930s or even 40s tree planting alongside, much of it pollarded to keep it below hydro wires, has been ringed with snow fence, apparently to be retained. Perhaps this is going too far, for these rather miserable specimens could so much better be replaced by a properly coordinated planting scheme of silver maples or the like that made much of Highway 3 further south so attractive.

The Kingston Road (if you come from Kingston, the York or Toronto Road), or Highway 2 between Cobourg and Trenton was improved last year. All in all a very commendable job and a section still a great delight to drive along. And what a relief from 401 as you take off from Newcastle and drive east to Trenton, through the "eye of the needle" underpass just at the east end of the former, past Newtonville,

Welcome and down the hill into Port Hope's majestic Walton Street, then on to Cobourg past its monument of Victoria Hall, its clock in line with your approach. Onward to Barnum House, the ACO's signature, into the charming centre of the Village of Grafton, the old general store still there, but still vacant and next door a curious but quite attractive new Post Office, in a more obvious attempt, this time we think successful, of being sympathetic to an old setting. Then through Colborne, with its splendid main square and park. On to Brighton where you may take a short-cut to the Carrying Place and Prince Edward County or carry on to Trenton. After that, to avoid "rururbia" — that no-man's land neither town nor country, but the inevitable tawdry interurban strip, back to 401, to return to Highway 2 perhaps via 49 and Deseronto or 41 at Napanee and on via the milestone and macadam road to Kingston.

But all is not well, and we wonder what MTC is up to sometimes, particularly in its spraying programs. For we saw with great concern on one trip in June along the Cobourg - Brighton stretch of Highway 2 that herbicide had been sprayed, apparently indiscriminately. The killings — innocent may-apple close to hedges and what particularly infuriated us — a double yellow Scotch rose, possibly a Harrison's yellow, and a very large and healthy bush, killed in high blossom. This was a remnant from an old house site. What a stupid, dastardly act on a Heritage Highway. But this was not all: a little further along, a swipe of spray had killed off the edge of a lilac thicket in front of an old house and apparently just missed (or did it?) a brand new planting of roadside trees, we presume the work of MTC too. This contrasted with another experience we had a few days later when we noticed a sun-tanned youth poised on a salvaged car seat (Toyota or Austin we could not tell) on the back of the familiar yellow and black MTC truck, carefully aiming squirts at weeds like chicory encroaching on the shoulder. This was on Highway 33 between Adolphustown and Bath, where obviously a Heritage Highway is being treated with respect and so with care. (However about ten days later we travelled the same route and viewed with some astonishment the brightest of light blues (that same plant chicory) and wondered whether a few plants had been missed or that some mysterious elixir had been mixed by mistake!).

Last year we noted the acrid smell of similar "killers" being used along 401 in Eastern Ontario where one of few reliefs to a very dull stretch is the roadside vegetation and regeneration. But ferns, shrubs and bullrushes (and waterways thereby) were being treated. It's all up again this year — to be, with us, poisoned again? We wonder.

This periodic spraying has wrought havoc in the

past. For many years that same stretch of Highway 97 previously referred to, particularly as it approached Galt, was a glorious carpet of wild asters in their sumptuous profusion of late summer and early fall. Then suddenly it disappeared, and it has taken years to make a re-appearance. How far a cry this is from the practice in England's rural Devon where the hedgerows are not allowed to be trimmed until the wild plants and blossoms have ceased to flower!

P.J.S.

\* \* \* \* \*

## NEWS FROM OTHER ASSOCIATIONS

### THE BAY OF QUINTE U.E.L. ASSOCIATION, WITH THE LENNOX AND ADDINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

#### Houses Along the Loyalist Trail Tour.

May 26, 1984

10-5 p.m.

Tickets \$8.00. Write c/o Lennox and Addington Museum, Box 392, Napanee, Ontario.

#### Bulletin

#### Canadian Society of Decorative Arts

In Volume 2 No. 2, there is mention of an interesting exhibition of the theme of the evolution of classical architecture over the centuries. Unfortunately it will be over by the time ACORN is published. *The Villas of Pliny and Classical Architecture in Montreal* was organized jointly by the Museum and the Canadian Centre for Architecture of Montreal in cooperation with the Institut Français d'Architecture of Paris. Pierre du Prey of the CCA was the guest curator responsible for the exhibition.

The first of three sections displays a theme of long-standing interest to architects: the two country villas belonging to Pliny the Younger, a Roman writer of the first century A.D., who described them in letters which have come down to posterity. This historical overview explores the Roman villa as a place of retreat, as seen in works by masters like Raphael (1483-1520) and Andrea Palladio (1508-1580), as well as modern architects like Léon Krier (born 1946).

## GENERAL NEWS AND ARTICLES

#### INFILL

The presentation on Infill at this year's Annual General Meeting produced a lively discussion on how new work can be designed to fit in with the old.



The following is a reprint of an article by ACO president, Howard V. Walker, which appeared originally in the *Toronto Globe and Mail*. We would be pleased to hear from our readers on this subject.

### Fake Architecture: A Historical Hangup

*Mr. Walker is a Toronto architect*

Generally speaking, few people would prefer a forgery to the genuine article, especially once the counterfeit has been exposed. How strange that in architecture, mother of the arts, we find not only acceptance of subterfuge but actual encouragement by those who apparently wish to be hoodwinked. Consider, for example, the double standards frequently applied concerning the design of new buildings whenever the question of blending new work with old arises. Currently, the issue is a controversial one at Niagara-on-the-Lake where construction of a post office and other buildings is the subject of debate. Honest citizens who would never dream of slipping

a lead nickel into a slot machine appear to have no qualms when it comes to faking a nineteenth century streetscape. Not so long ago, one recalls such an approach being proposed to fill in the gaps between the façades in Toronto's old Town of York district, in repetition of the speculative builders' pseudo-Georgian town-housing of the last decade which has already blighted some of the city's older residential neighbourhoods. Unfortunately, the situation is not improved even when these actions spring from a well-intentioned, albeit misguided, motivation. Ironically, the problem is coming to a head at a time when public appreciation of our architectural heritage is growing and when increasing numbers of our distinguished older buildings are being restored to new uses. Appreciation and understanding of architecture needs to be more than skin deep, though, and to be hung-up on historical styles is to misunderstand its nature. It would be absurd to infer that architectural conservation is somehow equated with setting back the clock to some predetermined date when history of architecture itself is one of constant progression and change.

There is no one *style*, there is only the best we can create from our own inner and outer resources at a given time—and there is no reason why the best of one period cannot be compatible with the best of another.

Do the English cathedrals suffer from their many

centuries of growth and change? Hardly. Their resulting architecture, frequently triumphant but never dull, is also a lively record of English history, of the life and times of the builders, from Norman arch to Gothic vault.

We react with dismay and rightly so, when we read of the destruction wrought on ecclesiastical buildings, both in England and Europe by the nineteenth century Restorationists—earnest zealots who purged these structures of some of their later “unacceptable” historical styles and sought to “restore” them by replacing the original with imitations of the earlier periods with which they were enamoured.

Implicit in the appreciation of older buildings is an evaluation of them for what they are and what they represented the day they were built. Naturally, not all the buildings that we have inherited are architecturally distinguished—any more than many buildings of recent vintage. The architectural merit which each possesses is a measure of its designer's understanding of his own times, of the values shaping them and of the technologies at his command. Architecture is the physical expression of a *continual seeking*, it can no more remain static and still have meaning than the society which it mirrors.

How then, are we showing respect for and appreciation of our distinguished early buildings by having them consort with new structures which merely ape them? In such buildings style masquerades as substance, there is surface without depth, the flow of life is denied and the exercise merely degrades. Their bogus façades, ludicrous when badly executed, mislead and confuse those who come to enjoy the genuine work.

New buildings can certainly show respect with integrity even if this does require considerably more skill, judgment and creativity. A first requirement is a sensitive regard for the distinctive characteristics of their predecessors, which involves among other things an acknowledgement of their scale, proportions, height lines, their materials of construction, detailing and physical setting. On this foundation can arise authentic architecture which, while duly solicitous of its neighbors, will also find expression in contemporary terms which have meaning and significance for our own day and age.

### NEW PUBLICATIONS

#### **The House, A Portrait of Chatsworth**

This book, by the Duchess of Devonshire, and published by MacMillan of London, in 1982, is a most fascinating and informative account of the great house, (The House as it is known among members of the family, their friends and the staff), as it now



stands and as it has evolved. It is a most readable story made doubly rewarding by using the Handbook to Chatsworth, the Bachelor Duke's tour of the place written in 1844 as a letter to his sister, in a comparison to the present state of the house brought back from its wartime occupation as a girls' school and converted to become a dwelling as well as serving as the family seat. From the first page to the last word of the epilogue there are various morsels of good-humoured wisdom, much fair comment and even commendation for the architect in charge of more recent renovations. The remarks on the old order and the modern bureaucracy are not without point.

The building of this magnificent house, and the contributions to its fabric, a gaily coloured quilt from the Renaissance to the present, is incredible, but in words of the author becomes a heartwarming story of human endeavour and success through many trials and tribulations. But it is not without its poignant losses on reflection, such as the destruction of Paxton's famous grand conservatory constructed for the sixth Duke (the Bachelor Duke) in the 1840s: this sad event, brought about by a need to conserve in one sense, namely manpower, fuel and maintenance which all constituted a tremendous drain on the estate's finances, was to see its demise shortly after the first World War. It was the first great iron and glass structure to prove the feasibility of that engineering masterpiece, the Crystal Palace, which housed the Great Exhibition in 1851. This even greater landmark, tragically, was to be destroyed by fire in 1936, so that the genius of Paxton is recorded mainly in illustration and by his lesser but still very noble works like Chatsworth's Emperor Fountain. Despite the sad asides there is much to be enjoyed in *The House, A portrait of Chatsworth*, and no wonder for its author besides being Deborah, Duchess of Devonshire, is one of the Mitford sisters, perhaps as good a reason as any for her sensibility and welcome sense of humour.

P.J.S.

### Cornerstones of Order

Courthouses and Town Halls of Ontario, 1784-1914

Richly illustrated and vividly written, *Cornerstones of Order* brings together for the first time the story of Ontario's early courthouses and town halls.

Two of Canada's most distinguished architectural historians, Marion MacRae and Anthony Adamson, have drawn on personal diaries, contemporary records and archival material to reconstruct the social setting of over 75 public buildings — and to bring to life a unique and important period of Canadian history.

Marion MacRae and Anthony Adamson blend expert architectural analysis, lively commentary, a

sense of humour and an uncanny knack for putting a microscope on the most telling parts of Canada's early history. The result is a delightful celebration of our heritage.

272 pages full-colour cover, illustrated in b & w and colour with over 200 photographs and architectural drawings. \$45.00 cloth. Now available in bookstores across Canada. Clarke-Irwin (1983) Inc., 409 King Street W., Suite 401, Toronto, Ont. M5V 1K1.

### Belleville's Heritage

Published by The Hastings County Historical Society, this booklet shows maps, plans, and houses of Belleville. \$2.50 a copy, 50¢ for handling. Order from The Hastings County Historical Society, P.O. Box 1418, Belleville, Ont. K8N 5J1.

### Check The Style

Another little pocket sized booklet by Marion Walker Garland should prove a useful guide for those going on house tours. It sells for one dollar. When ordering enclose a self-addressed, business sized envelope with your money.

The drawings by Anthony Adamson, Peter John Stokes, and Howard Walker make the Ontario Architectural styles easy to spot.

### Early Canadian Court Houses

Compiled by Margaret Carter — Parks Canada  
Now available through authorized bookstore agents and other bookstores, or by mail from the Canadian Government Publishing Centre, Supply and Services Canada, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S9

also

### The Summer of 1744

A Portrait of Life in 18th Century Louisbourg  
Prepared by A. J. B. Johnston for Parks Canada  
This book is a valuable prelude to visiting the historic Louisbourg seaport and fortress, and a good resource document for both historian and students concerned with 18th century history.

### STOP PRESS

### DO NOT MISS THIS

### Peter John Stokes' Spring Bus Tour

Saturday and Sunday, June 9th and 10th, 1984.  
London by way of Paris not covered on previous trips.  
Picnic lunch and tour of London — then north and west to Strathroy and Melbourne returning to bed and

breakfast in houses of London Architectural Conservancy members — Sunday — St. Thomas — Sparta (walking tour) — Aylmer — (lunch and walking tour) — Tillsonburg — Ingersoll — dinner at Elmhurst — then back to Toronto between 9-10 p.m.

Cost — \$130.00 per person — single supplement \$10. Reservation — \$75.00 April 2 — final payment June 2nd. Regret no money refunded. Send reservations to Architectural Conservancy of Ontario Inc., 191 College Street, Toronto M5T 1P7.

Meet at 191 College Street, Toronto, at 9:00 a.m. Saturday, June 9th. Any questions, contact Mrs. R. J. W. Sculthorpe, R.R. #3, Port Hope, Ontario L1A 3V7. Phone 416-885-6960.

We are receiving requests by mail for copies of ACORN, and also requests to be put on our subscription list. These letters have been answered stating that ACORN is not for sale and suggesting that the writers join the nearest ACO branch and receive three copies a year.

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We are always glad to receive pictures which accompany articles. If you wish these pictures returned, please send a stamped, addressed envelope. Ed.

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If you wish to know the address of your nearest branch, write the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, 191 College St., Toronto, Ont M5T 1P7.

Please send any change of address to your branch secretary and also to Mrs. Margaret Wulff, A.C.O., 191 College Street, Toronto, M5T 1P7. In this way it can be put on the master mailing list.

**ACO's Address: 191 College Street, Toronto, Ontario M5T 1P7**

**All submissions to ACORN please send to Editor-in-Chief, ACORN,  
86 Augusta St., Port Hope, Ontario L1A 1G9**

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